

## **Berea Bible Handbook – Part Six**

### **Hebrew Prophecy from Isaiah to Daniel**

### **Part Six: The Book of Isaiah**

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### **The Prophets**

Prophecy was an element in Sumerian and Acadian religion, and prophetic ecstasy among these two races may have resembled in outward form its manifestation among the prophets of Israel. But the latter presented a phenomenon unique in the history of the world in the religious and moral content of their messages, and in the uprightness and fearlessness of their characters. From Moses onwards, until the Advent of Christ, God put His words into their mouth (Deuteronomy 18:15).

It is believed that ancient traditions have repeatedly been the main engine for the development and evolution of world religious thought. From the Hellenistic traditions in Christianity, to the Sumerian influences on the Old Testament writers, world religions have often absorbed and grown from the very cultures that surrounded them. Despite the insistence of many that any particular world religion is completely original and without precedent, a cursory study of those

societal traditions that such religions grew from may yet reveal deep cultural grains, assimilated and even renamed, but ever present in their influence.

The purpose of this part therefore is to document the now extinct religions of the world, to reveal their wealth of custom from their remaining documents, and to help place the roots of modern religions in better context.

Ultimately, such religious traditions often eventually became the very foundations that their successors built upon, the influences of ancient cultures ever pervading current civilisations of humanity in both obtuse and far more subtle ways.

## **The Prophets**

The history of the rise and fall of the Hebrew nation are found in the history books (Genesis-Esther). The prophets appeared during the days of the fall of the Hebrew nation. At the moment of the apostasy of the 10 tribes at the close of Solomon's reign and Israel's golden age the ministry of the prophets began. The prophets gave a wake up call as soon as people began to forget God.

**Prophets of the Assyrian Period:** Jonah, Joel, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum

**Prophets of the Babylonian Period:** Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Ezekiel, Obadiah, Daniel

**Prophets of the Persian Period:** Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

God warned Israel and Judah over and over again through the prophets. The people forsook God, worshipped idols, did injustice, and loved evil. But God was kind enough to forewarn them of coming judgments because of sin and apostasy, and he would do marvellous miracles through the prophets that would give them hope and encouragement. The prophets even revived their faith in the coming Messiah and His glorious Kingdom. Prophets like Jeremiah warned both Israel and Judah even after it was too late and there was no chance for recovery.

Then you shall break the flask in the sight of the men who go with you, "and say to them, "Thus says the LORD of hosts: Even so I will break this people and this city, as one breaks a potter's vessel, which cannot be made whole again; and they shall bury them till there is no place to bury. "Thus I will do to this place," says the LORD, "and to its inhabitants, because of all the houses on whose roofs they have burned incense to all the host of heaven, and poured out drink offerings to other gods." Then Jeremiah came from Tophet, where the LORD

had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in the court of the Lord's house and said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will bring on this city and on all her towns all the doom that I have pronounced against it, because they have stiffened their necks that they might not hear My words.'"

God was also very clear about prophets who spoke falsely and worked miracles to back up their words:

### **Deuteronomy 13:1-3**

"If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, "and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'-- which you have not known--' and let us serve them,' "you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

### **Deuteronomy 18:20-22**

'But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' "And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?'--"when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

### **The men**

The prophets whose books we have in the Bible suddenly started to appear in the eighth century BC. Of course, there had been prophets before that-people like Nathan and Elijah-but their story had always been included in the wider history of the people, which we have in the books of Samuel and Kings. Now, however, something seems to have happened which made such a difference that it was necessary for their words to be recorded separately in books of their own, not wrapped up with the historical narrative.

The first of these prophets was Amos, and very soon after there also came Hosea, Isaiah and Micah. They are all quite different from each other, so what can it be that unites them in having books named after them.

In the past, prophets like Elijah and Elisha were quite as committed and passionate as Amos and Hosea, and they too could utter condemnations of those who broke God's law, oppressed the poor and so on. But they only ever envisaged the judgment of individuals or groups within the nation. It never occurred to them that things could have got to such a point that God would have to destroy the nation as a whole. For the first time with Amos, however, that possibility is envisaged; indeed, it is actually announced! (Amos 5:2, Amos 8:1-2)

And so it happened; within a generation or two at the most, Israel was no more. The Assyrians had defeated her and absorbed the territory into their own Greater Assyria. Only the southern kingdom of Judah, with its capital in Jerusalem, remained to carry forward the story which we now have in the Bible.

## **Prophets in the Old Testament**

The prophets named in the Old Testament are people who have claimed to have been encountered by the supernatural or the divine, an interpreter of the will of God. There are many different prophets whose names are mentioned in the Old Testament.

- **Ancient Prophets** - The Hebrew Bible (called the Tanakh) records ten ancient prophets.
- **Patriarchal Prophets** - The names of prophets from Adam to Balaam are known as the patriarchs and as such are considered prophets and seers.
- **Judge Prophets** - There are four Judge Prophets who emerged when Israel evolved into a federation of tribes who were ruled by Judges.
- **The King's Prophets** - These are the Old Testament Prophets who guided the following Kings of Israel: Saul, David, Solomon and Rehoboam.
- **Prophets of Israel and Judah** - After the death of King Solomon the kingdom of Israel split into two halves. The Southern Kingdom of Israel, called Judah, had two tribes and the Northern Kingdom of Israel, referred to as Israel, had ten tribes - the prophets of this time were referred to as the Prophets of Israel and the Prophets of Judah.
- **Captive Prophets** - When the Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed the people of Israel were exiled and became captives of the Babylonians - the prophets of this time were referred to as the Captive Prophets.
- **Prophets of the Return**

## **List of Old Testament Prophets**

The names of the Ancient Prophets of the Old Testament are as follows:

Adam; Seth; Enos; Enoch; Methuselah; Noah; Shem; Eber; Melchizedek.

The names of the Patriarchal Prophets of the Old Testament are as follows:

Abraham; Isaac; Jacob; Joseph; Caleb; Hur; Jethro; Moses; Aaron; Assir;  
Joshua; Phinehas; Boaz; Beor; Balaam

The names of the Judge Prophets of the Old Testament are as follows:

Eli; Gideon; Elkanah; Samuel

The names of the King's Prophets of the Old Testament are as follows:

Nathan; Gad; Ahimelech; Abiathar; Shemaiah; Iddo

The names of the Prophets of Israel are as follows:

Ahijah; Micaiah; Beer; Hosea; Amos; Jonah; Elijah; Elisha; Oded

The names of the Prophets of Judah are as follows:

Oded the Exhorter; Azariah; Hanani; Jehu; Jahaziel; Eliezer; Obadiah;  
Joel; Zechariah; Amos; Isaiah; Zechariah; Micah; Nahum; Maaseiah;  
Neriah; Jeremiah; Baruch; Zephaniah; Habakkuk; Urijah

The names of the Captive Prophets are as follows:

Daniel; Ezekiel; Mordecai; Seraiah;

The names of the Prophets of the Return are as follows:

Ezra; Haggai; Malachi; Nehemiah; Zechariah

The **Major prophets** include all of the following: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, Ezekiel and Daniel.

The **Minor prophets (the Twelve Prophets)** include all of the following: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

### **Isaiah the man and the book**

We do not know as much as we should like about the prophet Isaiah himself. He is not mentioned anywhere outside the Bible, and although he is referred to in

the books of Kings and Chronicles, it is only in material which is duplicated in his book. So effectively all we have to go on is contained in the one book - Isaiah.

From that book, we can suppose that he lived in Jerusalem; although of course other places are mentioned, Jerusalem is the only place where Isaiah himself is said to have been present (e.g. in the narratives in chapters 6-8, 20, and 36-39). What is more, he seems to have had easy access to the royal court (see especially chapter 7), and to be well informed about the affairs of state. It is therefore generally assumed that he came from a family that would have been included in the ruling classes; whether he was in fact related to the royal family in some way is possible, though entirely unknown.

From the way he writes we can see that he was well educated in the best traditions of the time. It is not just his fine use of language which impresses, but also the way that he incorporates insights from the distilled wisdom of the Israelite people. It is probable that such material will have formed an important part of the national curriculum of the time. Only a few families, whose children were destined to follow their fathers into the court bureaucracy or other positions of responsibility, will have received a formal education, including learning to read and write. It looks very much as though Isaiah should be included among them.

Not everything in the long book which bears his name was necessarily written by Isaiah, however. From chapter 40 onwards, first, everything relates historically not to the Jerusalem of Isaiah's own day, but to the situation of the Jewish exiles in Babylon over 150 years later. Similarly, chapters 56-66 find us back again in Jerusalem, not in Isaiah's time, however, but rather in the period of the restoration after the Babylonian exile-the times of which we read in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, for instance.

Finally, even within the first part of the book, there is material (such as chapters 24-27 and 34-35) which seems to refer to these later periods as well, and not to the times of Isaiah. And while chapters 36-39 certainly relate stories about Isaiah, it is unlikely that they were actually written by him. When elsewhere he talks about himself, as in chapters 6 and 8, for example, it is as 'I'; he does not refer to himself in the third-person 'he', as we find in 36-39 and some other places.

For these and other reasons, scholars believe that the book of Isaiah is a collection of the work of a number of prophets and other writers. That does not in the least lessen their importance or value, of course, but it does suggest that

their inspired words which have come down to us are ultimately more important than the individuals who wrote them.

### **The Old Testament in the Christian Religion**

In the Christian religion the Old Testament refers to the books that form the first of the two-part Christian Biblical canon. A canon, is a term derived from a Greek word which means a standard. It is believed the Books of the Old Testament were written and compiled between the 12th and the 2nd century BC. This section contains a selection of free, online Bible stories with verses and text from the books of the Old Testament together with lists of the Old Testament Prophets and the Books of the Old Testament. Each of the Old Testament bible stories have bible pictures depicting famous scenes from the books of the Old Testament. These stories from the Old Testament feature famous men and women including Cain and Abel, Moses, Joseph, Job, Jonah, Daniel, Jacob and Jesus. The Online Bible stories about women include those about Ruth, Esther, Mary, Delilah, Hannah Lydia.

### **Women of the Bible - the Prophetesses**

This section contains a list of the Women of the Bible who are described as prophets or prophetesses. In religion, a prophet or prophetess, is a person who has claimed to have been encountered by the supernatural or the divine, an interpreter of the will of God. A prophet is an authoritative person who serves as an intermediary with humanity. A prophecy is a prediction uttered under divine inspiration. There are twelve women in the Old Testament of the Bible who are described as prophetesses. These women of the Bible were close relatives of prominent religious leaders and characters of the Old Testament and include the mothers, wives and sisters of these famous men of the Bible. They are:

- Eve, the first woman
- Sarah, daughter of Haran
- Rebecca, daughter of Bethuel
- Leah, daughter of Laban
- Rachel, daughter of Laban and sister of Leah
- Miriam, sister of Moses and daughter of Amram
- Deborah, judge and wife of Lapidoth
- Hannah, judge and wife of Elkanah
- Ruth the Moabite
- Abigail, wife of David
- Huldah, daughter of Shallum
- Esther, daughter of Abihail

## The Prophetic Teaching

From the first, prophets and priests like Moses and Aaron existed side by side, distinct in function but united in their teaching. It was the part of the priest to teach the holiness of God dwelling in the midst of His people by the lessons of ceremonial cleanness, and to emphasize His claims upon their lives and His grace towards their trespasses through the offering of the sacrifices ordained by the law. The prophets equally declared the holiness of God, and proclaimed Him as ruler and judge, teaching the same lessons of His mercy and truth by direct precept, by the lessons of past and present history, and by warnings and promises regarding the future.

These two streams of thought, both issuing from a fountain as high up as the very origin of the nation, ran side by side down the whole history of the people. It is therefore a mistake to speak of 'prophetic' and 'priestly' religion either as in contrast, or in succession the one to the other. True, the prophets find fault with the priests, but it is for abusing or neglecting their functions, not for fulfilling them (1 Sa. 2: 28, 29; Ho. 4: 6). When Isaiah lifts up his voice against empty ceremonial it is not against the oblation itself, but the *vanity* of it that he inveighs (1: 13), as also in regard to the Sabbath, the appointed feasts, and prayer (1: 13-15). So Jeremiah, himself a priest, honoured the Sabbath, the temple and its sacrifices (17: 24-27), and for that very reason could not bear to see it made a place for commerce and idolatry (7: 11; cf. Mk. 11: 17).

Their complaint against the priests is not for innovations regarding the temple worship, but that they had been given a law which they had failed to study or to keep (Ho. 4: 6; 8: 12; Is. 1: 10); they rejected the law of Jehovah and despised His word (Is. 5: 24). It is evident from the prophetic teaching that the 'law of Jehovah' was regarded as an ancient law, once kept but now too often neglected. They do not call the people to enter on new paths, but they re-call them to walk in the old ones (Je. 6:16). They plead with them to 'return' to the Lord (Ho. 14:1; cf Am.4: 6-13) from whom they have 'backslidden' (Ho. 14: 4; Je. 2: 5-7), and whom together with His law, they have 'forsaken' (Ki. 11:33; Isaiah 1: 4; Je. 9:13).

The prophets, true to the historic sense of God's revelation, constantly make their appeal to the past (1 Sa. 12: 6- 11; Amos 2: 9-11; Mi. 6: 3-5; Ho. 12: 2-5); and far from seeing in it a degraded religious state which they have now outgrown, they look back upon it as a time of righteous judgment and God's favour (Is. 1: 26, v. 2; Je. 2: 2, 3).



They do not profess to proclaim, as some suggest, any new truth about Jehovah, but that He is the same from the beginning of their race, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Is. 29: 22; Mi. 7: 20), whose covenant-love (*chesed*) began with them (Gn. 24: 27, 47: 29, *kindly*), was revealed afresh to Moses (Ex. 34: 6), praised by David (Psalms 25: 6, to, 40: 11) and Solomon (I Ki. 8: 23), and recorded by the earlier and later prophets (Ho.2: 19; Is. 4: 2; Mi. 7: 20; Is. 16: 5; Is. 35: 3; Je. 9: 24; Dn. 9: 4; Ne. 9: 7 ff.). This Jehovah, whom they served from time immemorial, rules the nations (Am. 9: 7), guides the stars in their courses (Am. 5: 8), and displayed His power by the deliverance of His people from Egypt (Ho. 11: 1, 12:9; Hg. 2: 5).

In order to appreciate to the full the teaching of the prophets each should be read in the light of contemporary writings and events, and of New Testament references. We may distinguish the following stages:

1. Prophecy first appears in the Pentateuch (Gn. 49; Nu. 22); and Deuteronomy in particular contains those features of exhortation and prediction which appear in the latter prophets.
2. In the early days of the monarchy the revelation of truth and the historical manifestation of God's purposes were communicated through Samuel, Nathan, Gad, Elijah and Elisha, with others (see 1 and 2 Sa.; 1 Ki. 1-11; 1 Ch., 2 Ch. 1-11.).
3. The Assyrian period <sup>1</sup> produced the books of Joel, Isaiah, Micah, and Nahum, in relation to Judah, and Jonah, Amos and Hosea in Israel. (See 1 Ki. 12-2 Ki. 19; 2 Ch. 12-30)
4. In the Babylonian periode come Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, Obadiah, and Ezekiel (2 Ki. 20-25; 2 Ch. 32- 36).
5. From the captivity to the end of the Old Testament we have Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

When, after patient study, it is possible to survey the whole field of Old Testament history and prophecy in the light thrown back upon it by the Christian revelation, the grandeur of God's redemptive scheme becomes visible. The calling and election of Israel is seen, from the earliest days, against the background of Jehovah's universal rule. The true, spiritual meaning of the ancient law is constantly reasserted, and the inward and spiritual nature of the covenant becomes clearer, till, finally, the coming of Messiah, His sufferings and victory, are plainly foretold. It is evident that these prophecies came not by the will of men, but as the writers were borne along by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. 1:21).

# Prophets in Theology

## The function of the Prophet

The prophets of Israel played an important role in declaring Israel's future kingdom blessings regarding the original promise given to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 and amplified under the Palestinian Covenant (Deut. 30:11-16) and the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7:12-16).

The prophetic office was instituted in Deuteronomy 18:15-18 and immediately anticipated the greater prophet, Messiah, to whom the people would listen (Deut. 18:18). Several different terms are used to describe a prophet. The Hebrew term *nabhi* means a spokesman or a speaker and denotes "one who has been called or appointed to proclaim as a herald the message of God himself." A second Hebrew term describing the prophet is *roeh*, which means "to see" (1 Sam. 9:9); it is the older word for prophet and is basically synonymous with *nabhi*.<sup>2</sup> *Roeh* was the popular designation, whereas *nabhi* was the technical term.<sup>3</sup> A third term, *seer*, means "to see or behold," and is also synonymous with *roeh*. All three terms are used in 1 Chronicles 29:29, suggesting they are synonymous.

A major function of the Old Testament prophet as administrator of the theocratic kingdom was to call Israel back to the Mosaic law to which the Israelites were bound to the Lord in the suzerainty-vassal treaty.<sup>5</sup> The Mosaic law was a conditional covenant whereby God promised to bless the Israelites if they would obey Him; if they disobeyed Him, He would chastise them. Another function (among others) of the prophets was to proclaim predictive messages. The culmination of these predictive messages pertained to Israel's future under Messiah's kingdom rule.

## Anticipation of the Servant: Isaiah

The book of Isaiah has been referred to as the Romans of the Old Testament. The prophet Isaiah provides a majestic picture of Messiah through whom God will bring light to the nations, redeem Israel, provide forgiveness, and bring universal blessing to the earth in the millennial kingdom.

Isaiah's prophecies are mingled with announcements of impending judgments and future blessings. These future blessings depict a day when Israel will repent of her sins and enjoy the blessing of restoration to the land in Messiah's kingdom. Foundational to Isaiah's theology is the call of the prophet described in Isaiah 6. In this theophany Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord enthroned and surrounded by cherubim. Isaiah was also reminded of the

holiness of God (Isa. 6:3). The nation Israel was to recognize the holiness of God and itself walk in holiness (Lev. 11:44). The prophet goes on to describe a future day when Israel will be holy to the Lord and God's glory will fill the earth.

Isaiah is unusually descriptive in depicting Messiah's future kingdom blessing to Israel and the nations. The prophet refers to Messiah as the "Branch of the Lord" (Isa. 4:2); Messiah will sprout out of the Davidic line and bring blessing to the entire earth. Messiah will also be Immanuel, "God with us," in His life and ministry (Isa. 7:14). It is clear from Matthew 1:23 that the prophecy finds fulfilment in the birth of Christ. Christ's presence through His words and works demonstrates "God with us," for He performed the works of God and spoke the words of God.

Isaiah describes Him both as "a child born" and "a son given," the former suggesting His humanity and the latter His deity (Isa. 9:6). Isaiah's titles of Messiah also emphasize His deity: "Wonderful Counselor" (cf. 28:29), "Mighty God," and "Eternal Father" (Isa. 9:6).

Isaiah emphasizes that Messiah will not only bring blessing to Israel, but to the nations of the world. The despised area of Galilee, known as "Galilee of the Gentiles," would become glorious because of Messiah's presence (Isa. 9:1-2; cf. 42:6; 49:6). But Messiah is also destined to rule. As a descendant of the lineage of David, He will exercise governmental rule over the earth in the future kingdom (Isa. 9:7). His government will be just and equitable (Isa. 11:1-5). But His rule will be preceded by a judgment upon the nations of the world (Isa. 24:1-23). At that time Messiah will bless Israel (Isa. 14:1-2) and the nations (Isa. 25:6-12), restoring all that Adam lost. The curse of death will be removed through Messiah's rule (Isa. 25:8). During the kingdom the earth will know the truth because Messiah, the Teacher, will guide the people into His truth (Isa. 30:20-21). Messiah will bring His healing to the world (Isa. 35:5-6)—a healing that will be effective on those that walk in holiness (Isa. 35:8).

In developing His topic of the future glory of the Lord, Isaiah shows how God will bring blessing to Israel and the nations of the world. It will be on the basis of forgiveness of sin; hence, Isaiah deals not only with a reigning Messiah but also with a suffering Messiah—who is the same Person.

Messiah will suffer a violent death as a substitute for the sins of the world (Isa. 52:13-53:12).

Isaiah's theology provides considerable insight into God's method of resolving the dilemma of sin in the human race. Through Messiah, sin will be atoned for and the glory of God manifest on the earth in the future millennial kingdom.

## **Anticipation of a Regenerated People: The New Covenant**

The New Covenant, foretold by the prophet Jeremiah, explains how God's people Israel will enjoy the kingdom blessings. It is through a regenerated heart.

### **Nature of the New Covenant**

The prophet Jeremiah announced the impending invasion by Nebuchadnezzar and the subsequent captivity in Babylon. But Jeremiah envisioned a future day when God would restore the fortunes of Israel and bring them back into the land (Jer. 30:3). This would be an eschatological restoration for it would follow the time of great tribulation for Israel (Jer. 30:7). Jeremiah prophesied the rebuilding of Jerusalem in that future day (Jer. 30:18-24) and the resultant kingdom blessings (Jer. 31:1-12). The blessing of Israel in that future day would be based on the New Covenant that God would make with Israel (Jer. 31:31-34). That New Covenant is made with the nation Israel (Jer. 31:31) and will be in contrast with the Old Covenant, the Mosaic Covenant, which could not produce righteousness in the people.

Eleven provisions of the New Covenant are as follows: (Fulfilment of the Covenant)

Although the New Covenant is quoted in Hebrews 8, it cannot be taken to mean the New Covenant is fulfilled in the church for in Jeremiah 31:31, as well as in Hebrews 8:8, it is stated that the covenant is made with "the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." The covenant will be fulfilled with the nation with which the covenant is made.<sup>9</sup> The time of the fulfillment of the New Covenant is eschatological as seen from the context of Jeremiah 31. In the section of Jeremiah 30-33 the setting is established in Jeremiah 30:3 where it states, 'Behold, days are coming,' suggesting an eschatological setting (cf. Jer. 31:27). Jeremiah 30:7 describes the future tribulation period, whereas the remainder of Jeremiah 30 is millennial. Other prophets also regard the New Covenant as eschatological and therefore future (Isa. 55:3; Ezek. 16:60, 62; 20:37; 34:25-26; Hos. 2:18-20).<sup>10</sup> Isaiah related the fulfillment of the New Covenant to the return of Messiah and the forgiveness of Israel (Isa. 59:20-21). Jeremiah related it to Israel's restoration to the land (Jer. 32:37, 40-41). "The sequence of events set up by the prophets is that Israel will first be re-gathered and restored to the land and then will experience the blessings of the new covenant *in the land*. . . . Fulfillment of the prophecies requires the re-gathering of all Israel, their spiritual rebirth, and the return of Christ."<sup>11</sup> The New Covenant is not fulfilled in the church but in the future kingdom.



*Yeshua (Jesus) inscription*

### **The Prophetic Ministry of Jeremiah and Jesus (Yeshua)<sup>1</sup>**

The late Francis Schaeffer<sup>2</sup> once identified Jeremiah as the quintessential prophet for the postmodern age. "Jeremiah," he wrote, "provides us with an extended study of an era like our own, where men have turned away from God, and society has become post-Christian" (Schaeffer: *Death in the City*). The rabbis called him the "Weeping Prophet," and not without reason. His entire mission was to herald sorrow, destruction, and hardship for the people of God... As he finally saw the Holy Temple burn to the ground, it surely must have seemed as if his entire ministry had failed...

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<sup>1</sup> The Book of Jeremiah follows in Part Seven.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Schaeffer **Francis A. Schaeffer** (1912-1984) is most famous for his writing and his establishment of the L'Abri community. Described as 'the last modern theologian' — but opposed to theological Modernism —, Schaeffer was deeply committed to an Orthodox Protestant faith which answered the questions of the age.

The prophet Jeremiah (i.e., *Yirmiyahu ha-navi*: הנביא ירמיהו ) is generally regarded as one of the three "major" Jewish prophets (the other two being Isaiah and Ezekiel). He lived from about 640-570 BC and began serving as God's prophet during the 13th year of King Josiah's reign.

Jeremiah's long ministry would subsequently span the reigns of five different kings of Judah:

Josiah (640–609 BC), Jehoahaz (609 BC), Jehoiakim (609-598 BC), Jehoiachin (598-597 BC), and Zedekiah, the last king of Judah (597-586 BC).

Over the course of his 40 year ministry, Jeremiah saw the abrupt fall of the Assyrian Empire

and the steady rise of Babylonian dominance in the Ancient Near East. He witnessed prince Nebuchadnezzar's rise to power and understood the significance of his military campaign against Egypt at the battle of Carchemish in 605 BC. He foresaw that the political future of Judah would turn on the conflict between Babylon and Egypt:

Jeremiah was living in Jerusalem when Nebuchadnezzar (who by then had become king of Babylon) returned to capture the city in 597 BC. At that time Nebuchadnezzar deposed the Jewish king Jehoiachin and installed Zedekiah (זְדַדְקִיָּה) as his vassal (2 Kings 24:12,17). During Zedekiah's rule, Jeremiah advised the leadership of Judah to submit to Babylonian rule and not to look to Egypt as a political ally (Jer. 2:18,36; 37:7-8; etc.). Judah needed to accept the fact that its destruction was imminent and inevitable (Jer. 5:15-17). Because of his doom-laden prophecies, Jeremiah was regarded as a fatalist and a defeatist. The leaders of Judah rejected his message and regarded him as a traitor. His religious critics (i.e., the Levites and Temple administration) regarded him as a false prophet who did not believe in the doctrine of Zion's invincibility (Jer. 7:4). In particular, Jeremiah took issue with those who believed that the Temple functioned as some sort of "good luck charm" to ward off the threat of destruction from Judah. "Do not trust in these deceptive words: 'This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD.' For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly execute justice one with another, if you do not oppress the sojourner, the fatherless, or the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own harm, *then* I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your fathers forever. But you trust in deceptive words to no avail" (Jer. 7:5-8).

Jeremiah went on to condemn the "lip service" exemplified by the corrupted Temple and its public worship services: "Will you steal, murder, commit

adultery, swear falsely, make offering to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my Name, and say, 'We are delivered!' - only to go on doing all these abominations? I will do to the house that is called by my Name, and in which you trust, and to the place that I gave to you and to your fathers, as I did to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of my sight, as I cast out your kinsmen, the offspring of Ephraim" (Jer. 7:9-15).

Jeremiah's condemnation is clearly similar to that of Yeshua (Jesus), who overthrew the moneychanger's tables, stopped the daily sacrifice, and charged the priestly leadership with making His Father's house a "den of robbers" (Jer. 7:11, Matt. 21:13, Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45-46). Like Jeremiah, Yeshua insisted that the "kingdom of God is within you," that is, a matter of the heart of faith. There is no inherent sanctity of a physical place apart from a heart that is trusting in the LORD's love and righteousness (Jer. 7:4-7; Luke 17:21).

Indeed, Yeshua's harshest words were directed to religious leaders who made a pretense of their devotion to God, but were inwardly full of greed and self-deception:

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the *inside* of the cup and the plate, that the *outside* also may be clean. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness" (Matt. 23:25-28).

The "outer is not the inner," and vice versa. God abhors those who pretend to know Him but who are spiritual impostors (Matt. 7:21-23; 25:11-12; Luke 6:46). Because of such rampant, hypocrisy, both Jeremiah and Yeshua denounced the Temple as utterly corrupt and foretold its destruction (Jer. 25:9,11; Matt. 24:1-2).

Yeshua warned us about the "leaven" (i.e., doctrine - διδαχή) of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and politicians of his day (Matt. 16:6-12; Mark 8:15). In Luke's Gospel, this leaven is defined as *hypocrisy* (ὑπόκρισις): "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy (Luke 12:1)."

But what is hypocrisy? The word might come from the Greek prefix ὑπὸ (under) combined with the verb κρίνω (to judge), and hence refers to the inability to come to a decision and exercise genuine conviction. It is a state of being "double minded," duplicitous, and insincere... Later the word connoted playing a part,

"putting on a show," feigning righteousness, acting with insincerity, reusing "canned answers" or repeating the party line. Hypocrisy is therefore a form of self-deception. It is institutionalized prejudice dressed up as religion; it is counterfeit thinking that cheats the truth; it is ethnocentric nonsense that despises others as unworthy, inferior, etc. The "leaven of the Pharisees" is like old sourdough added to the community -- it "puffs people up" and is therefore based on human pride. The message of both Jeremiah and Yeshua was marked by repentance, humility, and the sincere desire to love and serve God.

**The prophet Jeremiah clearly foreshadowed the prophetic ministry of Yeshua our Messiah.**

Both Jeremiah and Yeshua were called to deliver the judgment of God upon sinful man. Both lived in a time of political upheaval and unrest for Judah. In a sense, both were "prophets of doom" who became "enemies of the Jewish state." Both condemned hypocrisy and foretold disaster unless the people turned away from sin and turned to God with all their hearts (Matt.15:8; Jer. 7:9-15). Both were "weeping prophets" who lamented over the City of Jerusalem (Jer. 9:1; Luke 19:41). Both were misunderstood and persecuted by the people of their day.

Both prophets were plotted against by the citizens of their own hometowns (Jer. 11:21; Luke 4:28-30), and both were rejected by the religious and political leaders of their day (Jer. 20:1-2; John 18:13, 24). Both rejected the Temple worship as corrupt and beyond repair. Both condemned the "religious" reinterpretation of the Torah (Jer. 8:8; Matt. 23:2-3; 23; Mark 7:5).

Both were forcibly taken into Egypt because of political persecution (Matt. 2:13; Jer. 44). Both were falsely accused, arrested, and unjustly beaten (Jer. 37:12-15; Matt. 26:61; 27:26). Both were rejected by the secular Jewish king of the Jews (Jer. 32:2-4; Luke 23:8-11). And yet both never abandoned the Jewish people and ultimately offered God's comfort and hope (Lam. 3:22-25, John 14:1,27). Jeremiah and Yeshua both preached the *New Covenant* ( **הַדָּשָׁה בְּרִית** ) of God that would transform a heart of stone into a heart of flesh (Jer. 31:31-34; Luke 22:20; Heb. 8:6-13; 9:15, etc.). Both foresaw that the true Temple of God was made without hands, built from material of hearts of those who truly serve God in Spirit and in truth... The destruction of the First Temple was the central catastrophe of the older covenant, just as the destruction of the Second Temple was the central catastrophe of the New Covenant. Because of the suffering and sacrificial death of Yeshua, the inner veil of the Temple has forever been rent asunder, and access to the Presence of God has been made available to all who trust in Him....



Because of his radical prophecies of doom, king Zedekiah eventually arrested Jeremiah and put him in the palace prison. Later Jeremiah witnessed the destruction of the city in fulfillment of his prophecies (Jer. 32:2-5; 38:28).

Like other prophets of the LORD, Jeremiah decried the false teachers and injustices of his day. "No one relents of his evil saying, 'What have I done?' Everyone turns to his own course, like a horse rushing for battle" (Jer. 8:6). And though he was of priestly lineage himself, he regarded the Temple in Jerusalem to be as corrupt as the Northern Kingdom's shrine at Shiloh (Jer. 7:4-15). He rejected the priest's narrow interpretation of the law as entirely deceitful (Jer. 8:8). Indeed, the entire culture was based on greed and deception, "from prophet to priest," everyone dealt falsely. "They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace" ( **שָׁלוֹם וְאֵין שָׁלוֹם שָׁלוֹם** ). This led to Jeremiah's apocalyptic warning of the coming destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the Jewish people (Jer. 25:9,11).

Around 590 BC, Zedekiah and the Jewish leadership of Judah openly rebelled against Babylon (2 Kings 24:18-20). This act of defiance prompted Nebuchadnezzar to besiege Jerusalem in 588 BC (on the 10th of Tevet; 2 Kings 25:1). After the two-year siege, Jerusalem ran out of food, and the walls were breached (on the 17th of Tammuz). Zedekiah's family was killed, and the king was blinded, bound, and sent to Babylon (2 Kings 25:7). The Temple, the palace, and all of the houses of Jerusalem were destroyed (on the 9th of Av), and the remaining treasures from the Temple were taken to Babylon (2 Kings 25:8-17). The majority of the Jews were displaced to Babylon and "only the poorest people of the land" remained. Nebuchadnezzar installed a man named Gedaliah to function as his governor (2 Kings 25:22). Zedekiah proved to be Judah's last king...

Jeremiah did not go with the Jews into exile, however, but was released from Zedekiah's prison to function as a liaison under a Gedaliah (Jer. 39:13-14; 40:6). He urged the Jews who remained in the land to submit to Babylonian rule and not to rebel (Jer. 27:11; 38:17). Despite his warnings, however, Gedaliah was murdered by Ishmael the son of Netaniah (who apparently regarded himself as a Davidic heir to the throne) and his gang of ten zealots (2 Kings 25:25). After Gedaliah's murder, the local Jews feared reprisal from Nebuchadnezzar and considered fleeing to Egypt to save themselves. Jeremiah warned them not to flee since the sword from which they were running would slay them there (Jer. 42:16-22). Unfortunately, the people disregarded Jeremiah's words and fled to Egypt anyway. Worse still, they abducted the prophet and took him with them (Jer. 43:2-7). A few years later Babylon conquered Egypt and tens of thousands of these Jewish refugees were killed (on the 3rd of Tishri). Jewish tradition says

that Jeremiah was later stoned to death in Egypt for denouncing the idolatry of the surviving Jews who had fled there (Jer. 44).

Jeremiah's prophecies (as compiled by his faithful scribe, Baruch) were later collected into the "Book of Jeremiah" which is part of the Jewish canon of Scripture. The material in the book is thought to cover 30 years, though not in chronological order. Jeremiah is also credited as the author of the acrostic poem found in the scroll of *Eichah* (i.e., the "Book of Lamentations"). In Jewish tradition, Jeremiah is not regarded to be as great as Isaiah: "All the harsh prophecies which Jeremiah would prophecy against Israel, Isaiah preceded and provided the healing" (*Eichah Rabati* 1:23).

### **Midrashim about Jeremiah**

Jeremiah was born in the small town of Anatot, about 3 miles northeast of Jerusalem. He is identified as a descendant of Rahab the harlot ( **הַזִּוְנָה רָהַב** ) by her marriage with Joshua, the successor of Moses (*Sifre, Num.* 78). His father Hilkiah was a Temple priest. According to midrash, he was prophetically born on Tishah B'Av to foreshadow his ministry of doom (Jer. 20:14). According to legend, it was evident that Jeremiah was destined for greatness from birth, since he born circumcised (*Avot d'Rabbi Nosson*). "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations" (Jer. 1:5). Jeremiah is said to have emerged from his mother's womb with a "great cry," which was said to foreshadow his lament for the destruction of Jerusalem. As a very young boy Jeremiah is said to have looked intently at his mother and said: "Mother, Mother, you did not conceive me in the way of women, and your path was that of the wayward woman. You set your eyes on another man and strayed from your husband. Why do you not drink the bitter waters of the sotah? You have been brazen-faced." When his mother asked, "Why do you speak to me this way?" Jeremiah replied, "I am not speaking about you, Mother; I am prophesying about Zion and Jerusalem" (*Pesikta Rabbasi*). Later God commanded Jeremiah not to marry and have a family because the coming judgment on Judah would sweep away the next generation (Jer. 16:1-4). Jeremiah often expressed his anguish of spirit which lent itself to his designation as the "weeping prophet" (Jer. 4:19; 9:1; 10:19-20; 23:9, etc.)

The sages sometimes compare Moses and Jeremiah. "Everything that is written about Moses is written about Jeremiah. As Moses was a prophet for forty years, so was Jeremiah; as Moses prophesied concerning Judah and Benjamin, so did Jeremiah; as Moses' own tribe (the Levites under Korach) rose up against him, so did Jeremiah's tribe revolt against him (Jeremiah was a kohen); Moses was

cast into the water, Jeremiah into a watery pit; as Moses was saved by a female slave (the slave of Pharaoh's daughter), so Jeremiah was rescued by a male slave (Jer. 38:7-13); Moses reprimanded the people in discourses, so did Jeremiah (*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana*). We may add that Jeremiah expressed the same reluctance as Moses to become a prophet and offered the same kind of excuses (God gave Aaron to be Moses' mouthpiece but directly put words into Jeremiah's mouth (Exod. 4:14-16, Jer. 1:8-9). Some scholars have said that Jeremiah might have even regarded himself as the coming prophet whom Moses foretold (Deut. 18:18).

As a young man, the LORD appeared to him and said, "Listen closely, Jeremiah. While you were still in your mother's womb, I sanctified you to be a prophet for My people. The time has now come for you to go forth and prophecy." Deeply moved and afraid of this responsibility, he replied: "Master of the universe, how can You send me to rebuke the Jews? They will kill me!

They even threatened to kill Moses and Aaron, who led them from Egypt, and they mocked Elijah and Elisha. Who am I to deliver your message to them? I am young - only a child. Who will listen to me?" (Jer. 1:6). The LORD reassured Jeremiah: "Be not afraid. You shall indeed go wherever I send you. I have chosen you precisely because you are so young and innocent. Go to them and pour out my wrath upon them (Jer. 1:7-10).

Jeremiah was dismayed that he must be the "prophet of doom." "He said, 'Master of the Universe, what sins have I done that in the days of all the prophets who preceded me and those who will follow me, you did not destroy Your House, but only through me?' The LORD answered, 'Even before I created the world, you were prepared for this mission'" (*Pesikta Rabati* 27:5). Nonetheless, Jeremiah begged the LORD not to send him: "The day on which I was born was an evil one (Jer. 20:14); May this day never be blessed (Tishah B'Av)" He continued to protest. "Consider the differences between Moses and me. In his time, the Jews were told, 'May the LORD bless you (Num. 6:24),' but I must bring them a curse (Jer. 29:22).

In Moses' day, You promised to protect your people and give them peace (Num. 6:26), but I must bring them news of evil days which will come to pass, days of darkness and death, of war and great tragedy (Jer. 16:5). Woe is me to be destined for such a bitter task! I am like a priest who discovers in the course of punishing the unfaithful woman that she is none other than my own mother! So I am consigned to deliver the news of exile and destruction to my people, who are as dear to me as my own mother!"

Jeremiah tried to make the people repent from their detestable Molech worship, the "king of fire" (the word "molech" is thought to be a corruption of the Hebrew word for king, *melech*: מֶלֶךְ, with the vowels of word "shame," *boshet*: בוֹשֶׁת, added). This gigantic statue apparently had an ox's head, a hollow belly, and outstretched arms. It was said to have stood within a Canaanite temple that had seven chambers.

According to the *Yalkut Shimoni* (an collection of midrashim), a person who brought the "god" a gift of flour was allowed into the first chamber; a person who brought a gift of doves could enter the second chamber. A sheep gave access to the third, a ram to the fourth, a calf to the fifth, and a bull to the sixth. But if a true worshipper brought his infant son for sacrifice, he would be granted access to the seventh "grand" chamber of the Ammonite temple. The priests of Molech would heat up the belly of the idol and then burn the child to death in the idol's outstretched arms. Their frenetic drumming and shouts to the idol drowned out the screams of the baby. God sent prophets to warn the people to turn away from this horrible sin, which "had never entered His mind" (Jer. 32:35; Lev. 18:21; Deut. 18:10; 2 Kings 16:3; 17:17; 21:6; 23:10; 2 Chron. 33:6), but the people refused to repent. Nonetheless, God heard the cries of the babies and decreed that in punishment for these atrocities the Holy Temple itself would be sent up in flames....

When he saw the Jews so crazed with the fires of their idolatry, Jeremiah asked them, "Why do you pursue idols? What attracts you to such emptiness? The Jews replied, "We have forsaken the LORD and He is angry with us. That is why we seek comfort in our idols..." (Jer. 8:14). This midrash reveals the profound connection between our faith in God's love for us and our tendency toward sin. Despair over oneself can lead to shame, and shame leads to shameful actions (Prov. 13:5; 23:7). A person who abandons hope in the LORD and His love becomes a prey to the devil himself. If he no longer believes God can give him comfort, he will turn to the grossest forms of immorality to assuage his sense of abandonment. According to *Devarim Rabbah*, "The Holy One, blessed be He, sent Jeremiah to the people when they sinned and said to them, 'Go tell my sons to repent.' The people said to Jeremiah, 'Should we return to the Holy One, blessed be He, with these faces? [i.e., we are ashamed to show our faces to Him].' The Holy One, blessed be He, sent Jeremiah again to tell them, 'My sons, if you return, is it not to your Father in heaven that you are returning? For He has never rejected you... By your lives, I will not deny my relationship with you.' Nonetheless, despite such appeals, the people mocked Jeremiah and clung to their shame. It was the shame of sin that led to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, just as it was the shame of sin that led to the death of the exiles in Egypt....

## **Anticipation of a Renewed Worship: Ezekiel**

The prophet Ezekiel describes the restoration of Israel to the land, her regeneration, and Israel's renewed worship in the millennial kingdom.

Just before Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of the Temple in 586 B.C. the glory of God left the Temple (Ezek. 11:23). God's holiness had been offended by the idolatry and apostasy of the people Israel. They had violated the Mosaic Covenant, which had bound them to the Lord, and had prostituted their faith. Ezekiel, however, foresaw a future day, when Israel would be restored to the land (Ezek. 36:1-37:28), worshiping God in a new, future Temple in the millennial kingdom (Ezek. 40:5ff.). Ezekiel describes the return of God's glory to this new, future Temple as coming from the east where it had also departed (Ezek. 43:2-4).

In a detailed discussion Ezekiel describes a converted and restored people worshiping God in new surroundings in the millennial Temple. Ezekiel 33-48 is eschatological, describing how God will convert and restore the nation to the land. Messiah, under the title of David, will be their King and Shepherd (Ezek. 34:23-24). God will bring them back into the land where they will enjoy rest and peace in the kingdom (Ezek. 36:1-37:28). The Hebrew people will be converted as God gives them a new heart and puts His Holy Spirit within them (Ezek. 36:25-27). After the Lord destroys their northern enemy (Ezek. 38:1-39:6) the land is cleansed and prepared for millennial worship. Chapters 40-48 describe the millennial worship of the Lord in detail. There are at least five distinct purposes for the millennial Temple.

(1) *To Demonstrate God's Holiness.* . . . (the) infinite holiness of Jehovah's nature and government . . . had been outraged and called into question by the idolatry and rebellion of His professed people. . . . This has necessitated the . . . judgment of sinful Israel . along with . . . the wicked surrounding nations. . . . This is followed by the display of divine grace in restoring the prodigal nation to Himself. . . .

(2) *To Provide a Dwelling-Place for the Divine Glory.* . . . This is "the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever" (43:7). . . .

(3) *To Perpetuate the Memorial of Sacrifice.* It is not sacrifice, of course, rendered with a view of obtaining salvation, but sacrifice commemorative of an accomplished salvation maintained in the presence of the revealed glory of Jehovah. . . .

(4) *To Provide the Center for the Divine Government.* When the divine Glory takes up its residence in the temple, the announcement is not only that the temple is God's dwelling-place and the seat of worship, but also that it is the radiating centre of the divine government. "This is the place of my throne" (43:7). . . .

(5) *To Provide Victory/ over the Curse* (47:1-12). From under the threshold of the temple house the prophet sees a marvelous stream issuing and flowing eastward in ever increasing volumes of refreshment until it enters in copious fulness into the Dead Sea, whose poisonous waters are healed. . . . Traversing the course of this wondrous life-giving water, the seer finds both banks clothed with luxuriant growth of trees of fadeless leaf and never-failing fruit, furnishing both medicine and food.

Ezekiel began his prophecy by describing the glory of God (Ezek. 1:428) and concluded his book by describing the return of God's glory to the millennial Temple (Ezek. 43:2). Ezekiel thus describes God's judgment and victory over sin whereby His glory can again be manifested to His people and to the nations of the world.



*Mount Olivet (Cemetery)*

**Prophecy, History Written in Advance**

The Bible is unlike all other "sacred books" in that it bases its "Authenticity" and "Authority" on **PROPHECY**. All other "sacred books" contain no predictions as to the future. If their authors had attempted to foretell future events, their no-fulfilment would, long ere this, have discredited their writings. Fulfilled prophecy is stronger evidence for the "Inspiration" and "Authenticity" of the Scripture than miracles. Prophecy is not a "haphazard guess," nor a "probability" made up on uncertain data like our "Weather Probabilities." Prophecy is history written in advance. Or, as another had said-"Prophecy is the MOULD OF HISTORY."

The importance of the study of the Prophetic Scriptures is seen when we recall that two-thirds of the Scriptures are Prophetic, either in type, symbol, or direct statement; and more than one-half of the Old Testament prophecies, and nearly all of the New Testament, point to events yet future. Then this is a "Dark World," and men need the "**SURE WORD OF PROPHECY**" to **LIGHT** them over the stormy "Sea of Time."

## 2 Peter 1: 20-21 (KJV 1611)

19: We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

20: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21: For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

When men see that God has a "Plan and Purpose" in the "Ages" they take heart, and have something to pin their faith to. It was because the religious leaders of Christ's day were not students of the Prophetic Scriptures that they failed to recognize Him when He came, and if the religious leaders of our day despise and reject the study of Prophecy, they will not be ready for Christ's Second Coming. There are "Four Prophetic Periods" clearly outlined in the Scriptures.

1.	<b>PATRIARCHAL</b>	<b>B.C.1921-1491</b>
2.	<b>MOSAIC</b>	<b>B.C.1491-1370</b>
3.	<b>JEWISH-Post Exilic</b>	<b>B.C. 500-400</b>
	Exilic	<b>B.C. 600-500</b>
	Pre Exilic	<b>B.C. 900-600</b>



#### 4. APOSTOLIC

A.D. 27-100

These Prophecies divide themselves into three grand divisions:

1.	<b>Past</b>	Fulfilled Prophecy	These are the prophecies that refer to the Jews, the Nations, and the moral and religious character of the times
2.	<b>Present</b>	Fulfilling Prophecy	
3.	<b>Future</b>	Unfulfilled Prophecy	

The "Requirements" of a Genuine Prediction are five in number:

1. It must have been made prior to its fulfilment.
2. It must be beyond all human foresight.
3. It must give details.
4. A sufficient time must elapse between its publication and fulfilment to exclude the prophet, or any interested party, from fulfilling it.
5. There must be a clear and evident fulfilment of the prophecy.

The value of the argument for the "Inspiration of the Scriptures" from Prophecy is evident when we study the Law of

#### "COMPOUND PROBABILITIES."

If I were to predict an earthquake in Philadelphia next year the chance would be 1 in 2 that it would occur. If I should add another prediction, that it would be on the Fourth of July, the chance is decreased to 1 in 4. And if I add another detail, that it will be in the daytime, the chance then becomes 1 in 8. And if I should add a fourth detail the chance would be 1 in 32. And if the details were 10 in number, the chance would be 1 in 10234.

Now there 25 specific predictions made by the Old Testament Prophets bearing on the betrayal, trial, death and burial of Jesus. There were uttered by different prophets during the period from B.C 1000 to B.C. 500, yet they were all literally fulfilled in 24 hours in one person. According to the Law of "Compound Probabilities" there was one chance in 33,554,432 that these 25 predictions would be fulfilled as prophesied. If one prophet should make several predictions as to some one event, he might by collusion with others bring it to pass, but when a number of prophets, distributed over several centuries, give detailed and



specific predictions as to some event, the charge of collusion cannot be sustained. It is a fact that there were 109 predictions literally fulfilled at Christ's First Advent in the flesh. Apply the Law of "Compound Probabilities" to this number, and the chance was only one in **BILLIONS** that they would be fulfilled in one person.

The argument that Jesus employed to convince those two mourning disciples walking to Emmaus that He was "The Messiah," was the appeal to "Prophecy." "And beginning at Moses and **ALL THE PROPHETS**, He expounded unto them in **ALL THE SCRIPTURES** (O.T. Scriptures), the things **concerning Himself.**" Luke 24:27 It would be intensely interesting reading, and amazingly helpful, if we only had in Luke's Gospel a full report of that afternoon's conversation. The two disciples were familiar with the things that had occurred the previous week at the arrest, trial, crucifixion and burial of Jesus, as well as the rumors of His resurrection. It was not difficult therefore for Jesus to take those things and by quoting from the Old Testament Scriptures show that they were just what the prophets had foretold would happen to the Messiah when He came. He reminded them that the prophet had said that the Messiah should be sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zech. 11:1-12), be betrayed by a friend (Psa. 41:9), forsaken by His disciples (Zech. 13:7), accused by false witnesses (Psa. 35:11), be dumb before His accusers (Isa. 53:7), be scourged (Isa. 50:6), His garments parted (Psa. 22:18), mocked by His enemies (Psa. 22:7-8), be given gall and vinegar to drink (Psa. 69:21), not a bone of His body broken (Psa. 34:20), die with malefactors (Isa. 53:12), that the price of His betrayal should be used to purchase a "Potter's Field" (Zech. 11:13), and that He should be buried in a rich man's tomb. Isa. 53:9.

But Jesus doubtless did not stop with simply proving that the **crucified Christ** fulfilled all the requirements of prophecy. It was a long walk they had. Jesus doubtless joined them soon after they left Jerusalem for Emmaus, which was some 6 miles away, and so had ample time in which to outline the "Prophetic Portrait" of the Messiah. Turning to Gen. 22:7-8, He pictured Isaac as a "Type" of Christ, and that God spared Abraham's son, but did not spare His own Son. He then called attention to the institution of "The Passover," and recalled the fact that in preparing the lamb for roasting, two spits were used, one thrust lengthwise through the body for support over the fire, and the other across the shoulders for turning, thus symbolizing the Cross on which the Lamb of God was suspended. He then reminded them that Jesus had said in one of His discourses-"And I, if I be **LIFTED UP**, will draw all men unto me." John 12:32. And having thus refreshed their memory, He took them back to that incident in the history of the Children of Israel of "The Brazen Serpent," and pointed out that that was a type of how men are bitten with the serpents of sin, and need a

Saviour, and how Jesus by being lifted up took the place of the "Brazen Serpent," and that all that look to Him in faith shall be delivered from the results of sin. Then Jesus spoke of the Prophet Jonah, and what befell him, and recalled His own prophecy, which doubtless they had three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 2:40), thus showing them that they should not have been surprised at the report they had heard that morning, that Jesus had **RISEN FROM THE DEAD**.

Is it any wonder that as Jesus thus went on outlining the "Prophetic Christ" and comparing Him with the "Historic Christ" they had known and loved, that their heart **'BURNED WITHIN THEM'** as He talked with them by the way, and opened up to them **the Scriptures**. Luke 24:32 How easy a conundrum seems when we know the answer, and how simple the Scriptures become when we see Christ in them, for "the **TESTIMONY OF JESUS**" is the **"SPIRIT OF PROPHECY."** Rev. 19:10. That is, the Spirit and purpose of all Prophecy is to **testify of Jesus**. How important then is the study of Prophecy.

Now we have seen that there were **109** predictions of the Old Testament Prophets literally fulfilled at Christ's First Advent, but there are **845** quotations from the Old Testament in the New Testament, and **333** of these refer to Christ. They vary from types and figures, that seem meaningless unless you place Christ in them, to exact predictions that at times descend to the minutest details. The only books of the Old Testament not quoted in the New Testament are Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, Songs of Solomon and Obadiah.

The Old Testament Scriptures bear a **"double witness"** to Jesus. They point out both His **"FIRST"** and **"SECOND"** Comings. And the same Prophet in referring to the "Two Comings" did not always name them in the proper order. This was confusing to the Bible students and religious leaders of Christ's day. In fact they did not know that there were to be "Two Comings." Therefore they are not to be too harshly judged because they rejected Christ, because He did not at once set up an "Earthly Kingdom." They did not separate the prophecies that foretold His **"SUFFERINGS"** from the prophecies that foretold His **"GLORY."** 1Pet. 1:10-12 They believed that all the prophecies that referred to the Messiah (Christ) were to be fulfilled at His First Coming. This accounts for why the people of Christ's day looked for Him to set up an Earthly Kingdom. They did not see that this "Present Dispensation," or **"CHURCH AGE,"** was to intervene between the **"SUFFERINGS"** (the **CROSS**) and the **"GLORY"** (the **CROWN**). But we stand on this side of Calvary and can readily separate the **fulfilled** prophecies of the "First Advent" from the **unfulfilled** prophecies of the "Second Advent." This is **clearly brought** out on the Chart of the "Mountain Peaks of Prophecy."

The Old Testament prophet saw the future as separate peaks of **one mountain**. He did not see that these peaks assembled themselves groups, with a valley, the **"VALLEY OF THE CHURCH,"** between. In the first group is the "Birth of Jesus," "Calvary," and "Pentecost." In the second group is "Antichrist," the "Revelation of Christ," and the "Kingship of Christ." The Prophet Isaiah (Isa. 61:1-2) did not see that **"comma"** in the second verse, that separated between the statements-**"THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD,"** and **"THE DAY OF VENGEANCE OF OUR GOD,"** was to span a period covering the whole of this "Present Dispensation," and already over 1900 years long. Likewise the Prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 23:5-6) separates with a **"comma"** the First and Second Advents, or between **"THE RIGHTEOUS BRANCH,"** and the **"KING WHO SHALL REIGN AND PROSPER."** The Prophets saw the **"Prophetic"** and **"Kingly"** work of Christ, but they did not see the **"PRIESTLY."** They saw the **"Altar"** (Sacrificial), and the **"Throne,"** but they did not see the **"TABLE"** (the Lord's Table) that was to come in between.

As shown on the Chart the Prophet saw in a direct line along the "Peaks of Prophecy," and did not see the **"valley"** of "The Church" in between. Our viewpoint is from the side. We face the "Valley" with the "First Advent" (the **CROSS**) to our left, and the "Second Advent" (the **CROWN**) to our right. All we have to do is to separate the prophecies of the "First Advent" from the prophetic references to Christ in the Old Testament, and apply the balance to His "Second Advent." This simplifies the study of Prophecy.

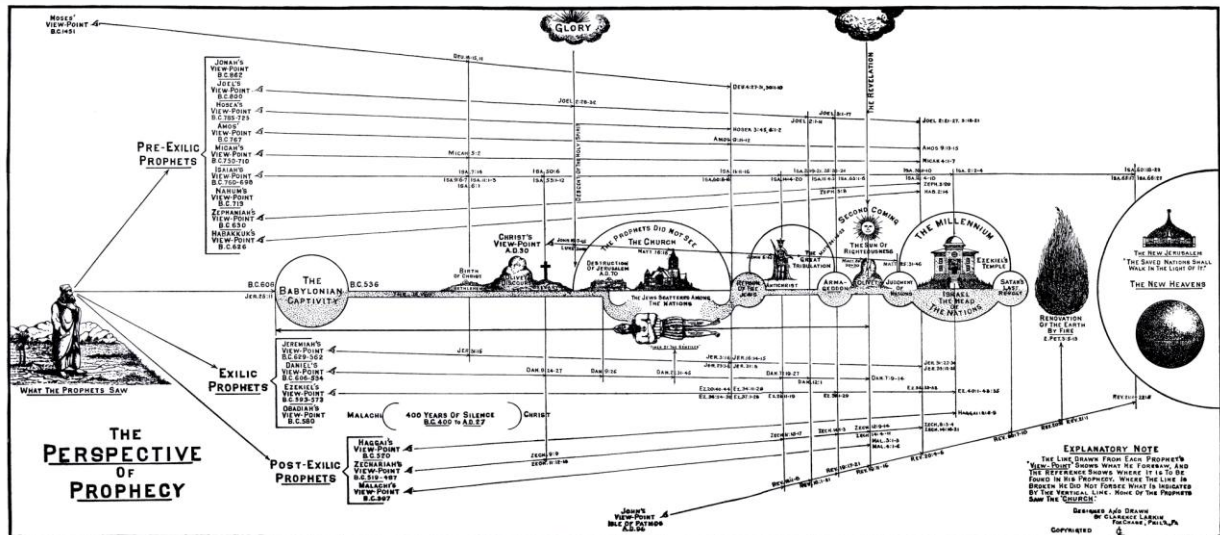
Isaiah's prophecies have mainly to do with the **Messiah** and **Israel**. Jeremiah is the Prophet of **Israel's return to their own land**. Ezekiel had to do with the **Restoration of Israel** to their own land, and with the **Millennial Land, Restored Temple,** and the **form of Worship**. Daniel is the Prophet of the **Gentiles** and their final great **Leader-ANTICHRIST**. Zechariah is most concerned about the events that shall happen at the Second Coming of Christ, as-

1.	Antichrist (the Idol Shepherd)	Zech.11:15-17
2.	Armageddon	Zech. 14:1-3
3.	Conversion of Israel	Zech. 12:9-14
4.	Christ's return to Olivet	Zech. 15:4-11
5.	Old age in Jerusalem	Zech. 8:3-8
6.	Feast of Tabernacles	Zech. 14:16-21

Notice that Zechariah does not see these events in their chronological order. All the Major Prophets, and 9 of the Minor Prophets, emphasize the **"Kingship of Christ,"** and it was this that confused the Religious Leaders of Christ's day.

## THE PERSPECTIVE OF PROPHECY

The Chart on "The Perspective of Prophecy" shows what each of the prophets foresaw of future events from the Birth of Christ on down to the New Heavens and the New Earth. A careful study of the Chart will show that the Prophet Nahum saw nothing beyond his time, while the Prophet Isaiah saw more and the farthest of all the prophets.



*See also enlarged chart at the end of this chapter*

There is no fact in history more clearly established than the fact of the "First Coming" of Christ. But as His "First Coming" did not fulfill all the prophecies associated with His "Coming," it is evident that there must be another "Coming" to completely fulfill them. It was because the religious leaders of Christ's day failed to distinguish between the prophecies that related to His "First Coming," and those that related to His "Second Coming" that they rejected Him. Peter tells us (1Pet. 1:10-11) that the prophets themselves did not clearly perceive the difference between the "Sufferings" and "Glory" of Christ. That is, they did not see that there was a "TIME SPACE" between the "Cross" and the "Crown," and that the "Cross" would precede the "Crown." But we have no such excuse. We live on this side of the "Cross," and we can readily pick out all the prophecies that were fulfilled at Christ's "First Coming" and apply the remainder to His "Second Coming." It is clear then that Christ's "First Coming," important as it was, is not the "doctrinal center" of the Scriptures, that is, Christ's First Coming was not the center of a circle that contains all doctrine, but was one of the foci of an ellipse of which the other is the "SECOND COMING."

This is shown on the above Chart on "The Two Comings." The chart takes in the whole Mediatorial Work of Christ, Prophetic, Priestly and Kingly. This included in an ellipse, the foci of which are "First" and "Second" Comings of Christ. The "Cross" represents His "First Coming" and the "Crown" His "Second Coming." Between the "Fall" and the "First Coming" we have the "**ALTAR**," which points backward to the "Fall" and forward to the "Cross." Between the "Comings" we have the "**TABLE**" which points backward to the "Cross" and forward to the "Second Coming." Between the "Second Coming" and the surrender of the "Kingdom" we have the "**THRONE**," which points backward to the "Second Coming" and forward to the surrendering of the "Kingdom." The Apostle Paul in his epistles clearly distinguishes between the "Comings" and their doctrinal significance. In his letter to the Hebrew's he classifies Christ's "appeared" (Heb. 9:26), "Now to appear" (Heb. 9:24), "Shall He appear" (Heb. 9:28). In his letter to Titus (Titus 2:11-12), he brings out the doctrinal significance of these "appearings." As a Prophet He died for our "**JUSTIFICATION**," as a Priest He lives at the right hand of God not only as our Advocate, but our "**SANCTIFIER**," and when He comes again as a King it will be for our "**GLORIFICATION**."

While the First and Second Comings of Christ are separated by this Dispensation they are nevertheless not complete in themselves, the Second necessitated the First, and the First demands the Second. They are both necessary to complete the Plan of Salvation. The First Coming was for the salvation of my "SOUL"; the Second is for the salvation of my "BODY," for there can be no resurrection of the body until Christ comes back.

### **1. The Second Coming, the Testimony of Jesus Himself**

**Matt 16:27.** "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

**Matt. 25:31-32.** "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the 'Throne of His Glory;' and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."

**John 14:2-3.** "In my father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will **come again**, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."



**John 21:22.** "If I will that he tarry till **I come** what is that to thee? Follow thou me."

## **2. The Testimony of Heavenly Beings**

**Acts 1:10-11.** "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This **SAME JESUS**, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come **IN LIKE MANNER** as ye have seen him go into heaven."

This passage declares that the **SAME JESUS** shall return **IN LIKE MANNER** as He went, that is, that His return will be **visible** and personal. The two "**men**" that "stood by" were probably Moses and Elijah. They appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. They were doubtless the "**two men**" who testified to the women at the tomb that Jesus had risen (Luke 24:4-5), and they will be the "**Two Witnesses**" that shall testify during the Tribulation. Rev. 11:3-12.

## **3. The Testimony of the Apostles**

**PAUL**-"For our conversation is in heaven; **from whence also we look for the Saviour**, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the work to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3:20-21.

"Looking for that '**Blessed Hope**' and the '**Glorious Appearing**' of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13.

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the '**Second Time**' without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

**JAMES**-"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the **coming of the Lord.**" James 5:7.

**PETER**-"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and **coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty." 2 Pet.1:16.

Peter here refers to the Transfiguration of Christ on the Mount (Matt. 17:1-5), which was a type of His Second Coming. Moses was a type of the "resurrection saints," and Elijah of those who shall be translated without dying. Peter, James and John were a type of the Jewish Remnant that shall see Him when He comes,

and the remaining disciples at the foot of the mount, unable to cast the demon out of the boy, of those professed followers of Jesus who shall be left behind at the Rapture, and who shall be powerless to cast the demons out of the demon-possessed people of that period.

**JUDE**- "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoke against him." Jude 14-10.

**JOHN**- "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him **at his coming.**" 1 John 2:28.

"Behold, he **cometh with clouds**; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Rev. 1:7.

#### **4. The testimony of the Lord's Supper**

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death **till He come.**" 1 Cor. 11:26.

The Lord's Supper is not a permanent ordinance. It will be discontinued when the Lord returns. It is a Memorial Feast. It looks back to the "Cross" and forward to the "Coming." An engagement ring is not intended to be permanent. It is simply a pledge of mutual love and loyalty, and gives place to the wedding ring. So the Lord's Table may be looked upon as a betrothal pledge left to the Church during the absence of her betrothed.

Paul in all his epistles refers but 13 times to Baptism, while he speaks of the Lord's return 50 times. One verse in every 30 in the New Testament refers to Christ's Second Coming. There are 20 times as many references in the Old Testament to Christ's Second Coming as to His First Coming.





# **The Prophetic Book Isaiah**

## **Parallels between Isaiah chapters 1-39 and chapters 40-66**

1: 2	66: 24
1: 5-6	53: 4-5
5: 27	40: 30
6: 1	52: 13
6: 11-12	62: 4
11: 11	53: 2
11: 6-9	65: 25
11: 12	49: 22
12: 6	54: 1
35: 10	51: 11

## **Introduction**

Isaiah's ministry occurred at a critical time in Judah's history. The Assyrian power was rising, and in the light of this fact two groups appeared within the nation. One sought alliance with Egypt and the other with Syria. Isaiah, however, forbade human alliances and urged the nation to trust in God (Young, Introduction. 211).

Isaiah's work as a prophet began in the year King Uzziah of Judah died, 739 BC (6:1). His call was accompanied by an apocalyptic vision of God on His throne which foreshadowed John's parallel vision in Revelation four (ch. 6). He prophesied during the reigns of "Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah" (1:1). Isaiah outlived King Hezekiah, who died in 686 B.C., for he recorded the death of King Sennacherib of Assyria (37:37-38), who was assassinated by two of his own sons in 681 B.C. As he lived on into the reign of Hezekiah's wicked son Manasseh, he apparently spoke of his public ministry in 1:1. Thus, his public prophetic ministry apparently lasted 53 years (739 B.C. - 686 B.C.), and he lived several years longer. Jewish tradition claims he was sawed in two at the command of King Manasseh (cf. Hebrews 11:37).

Isaiah ministered at a time when both Israel, under Jeroboam II, and Judah, under Hezekiah, had reached their zenith of prosperity and political power. Yet the seeds of destruction had germinated and almost reached maturity in both nations in the form of idolatry and its attendant vices, personal immorality and political corruption.

Assyria was the great power to the northeast, the Nazi Germany of ancient history, which would with incredible cruelty conquer the Middle East, destroying totally and finally the northern Kingdom, Samaria or Israel; and, but for the dependence on the Lord of Isaiah and Hezekiah, would have annihilated Judah as well. Under Tiglath-Pileser III (2 Kings 15:29; 1 Chronicles 5:26), who ruled from 745-727 BC, Assyria reached the height of its power and threatened to overwhelm God's people, the Jews. This king began the destruction of Israel by deporting the Israelite tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali (Isaiah 9:1-2). Ahaz, King of Judah, submitted to Tiglath-Pileser and became his vassal (2 Kings 16:7).

Tiglath-Pileser's successor Shalmanezar V conquered the northern kingdom (variously called Israel, Samaria or Ephraim) and killed or deported its upper class citizens in 722 - 721 BC (2 Kings 17:6; 18:9-12). Citizens of pagan countries were brought to Israel (2 Kings 17:24), and an idolatrous mixture of paganism and worship of the Lord was introduced (2 Kings 17:26-33). These people intermarried with the Israelites left in the land, and the resultant people became the Samaritans of Jesus' day. This was the end of the Northern kingdom.

The Assyrian King Sennacherib (705 - 661 BC) besieged Jerusalem, the capital of Judah and godly King Hezekiah. This was a crucial time in the history of Israel, and Isaiah was the man of the hour.

Amos (755 B.C.) and Hosea (750 - 725 B.C.) had been sent to warn Samaria, but Israel had not heeded. Isaiah and his younger, less known contemporary, Micah, successfully admonished Judah. Isaiah, in the capital, Jerusalem, prophesied to all classes of people, from kings to commoners. Micah preached to the common people in the villages and countryside.

With Judah's deliverance from King Sennacherib (ch's. 36-37), Isaiah turned his attention to the future menace of Babylon (ch. 39) and a future day of glory for God's people under the reign of Messiah (Christ).

## **Prophecy**

A prophet was one who spoke for God. Each prophet received a divine call or commission (e.g., Exodus 3:2-10). These men and women did not speak their own opinions, but "spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:20-21). Prophecy was not principally foretelling the future but was inspired preaching. The prophets were more "forth-tellers" than "fore-tellers." God revealed His Word and Will to the prophets in several ways, but principally by dreams and visions (Numbers 12:6).

God called and commissioned Isaiah to be a prophet (Isaiah chapter 6). The Lord chiefly made known His Will to Isaiah by means of visions (Isaiah 1:1). In a vision the prophet fell into a trance while awake and saw visible scenes with the mind's eye (cf. Numbers 12:4,16). Isaiah, more than most prophets, was blessed with divinely inspired visions of future events.

If we remember that Isaiah described scenes he saw in his mind in visions, we will more easily understand His language. The prophet painted a word picture of the scene in his mind. He described what he saw. Thus, he used the present tense, though what he saw might have been far in the future. Events of His time appeared close to or even touching occurrences separated by centuries, even as in a painting distant mountains seem to touch nearby hills. Intervening events were not seen, just as the valleys between the close up hills and far away mountains are hidden in a painting. Those distant mountains, seen only in dim, hazy outline are Messiah (Christ) and His Kingdom, for Isaiah's mind in his visions always came to rest in the hope of the Messiah.

## **Theme**

As Isaiah's name means "salvation is of the Lord," he, far more than any other old Testament prophet wrote of salvation. The word "salvation" is found twenty-six times in Isaiah and only seven times in all the other prophets combined.

Isaiah is pre-eminently the Messianic prophet. This means he prophesied about the Messiah (Christ). More than any other Old Testament prophet, Isaiah foretold the coming of Christ (2:1-4; 4:2-6; 7:14-15; 11:1 - 12:6; 24:21-23; 25:6-8; 26:1-2; 27:12-13; 30:18-26; 32:1-7,16-20; 33:17-24; 35:1-10; 42:1-9; 49:1 - 55:13; 60:1 - 62:12; 66:18-24).

Thus, Isaiah is quoted in the New Testament more than any other prophet. There are about fifty-four New Testament quotations of Isaiah (see Barnes, 31-33).

The great theme of Isaiah is **Salvation through Messiah the Servant of the Lord**. This theme is pre-eminently traced in perhaps the greatest prophecy of Christ in the Bible, Isaiah 52:13 - 53:13.

Two sub-themes are also of vital importance in Isaiah. The prophet, more than any other old Testament writer, portrays **the Holiness of the Lord**. The phrase "the Holy One of Israel" is found twenty-six times in Isaiah and occurs only six times in the entire remainder of the Bible. Isaiah especially glorified God over idols, showing the fact that the Lord is the only true God and that it is foolish to worship idols (ch's. 40 - 48).

The other sub-theme of Isaiah is **Humility Before God**. Isaiah calls those who do God's will the Lord's "servants." He uses this term to describe the nation of Israel (41:8-9), the Lord's prophets (44:24-26), Messiah (42:1), and the redeemed (65:8-9).

## **Outline**

The book of Isaiah has been called "The Little Bible." As the Bible has sixty-six books, Isaiah has been divided into sixty-six chapters. As the theme of the Bible is salvation in Christ, Isaiah, above all else and more than any other prophet, tells of salvation through the Christ to come. As the Bible has two major divisions, the Old Testament (39 books) and the New Testament (27 books), so Isaiah has two major divisions: the Assyrian Period (ch's. 1 - 39) and the Babylonian Period (ch's. 40 - 66). As the Old Testament brought condemnation, and the New Testament brings salvation; the first part of Isaiah primarily contains prophecies of judgment, whereas the second division predominantly consists of prophecies of peace. The historical chapters of Isaiah (ch's. 36 - 39) serve as a transition from the Assyrian Period to the Babylonian Period, even as the Old Testament prophets serve as a transition from the Old Testament to the New.

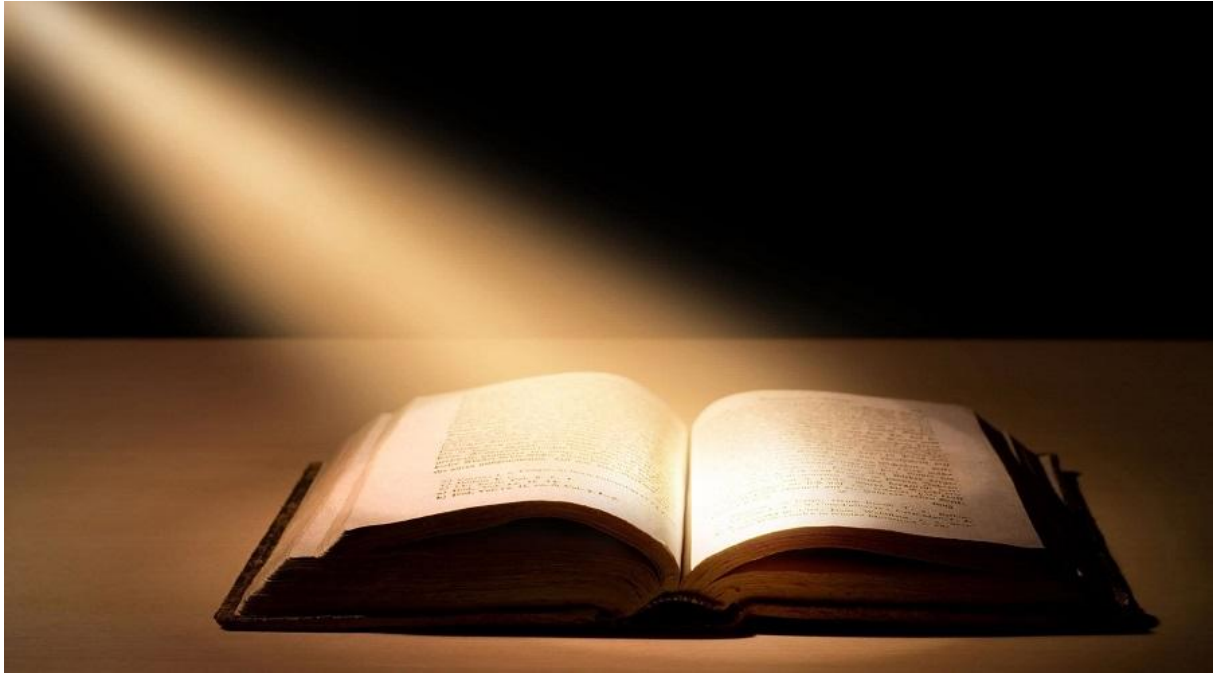
Here, then, is a simplified outline of Isaiah.

### **I. Prophecies of Judgment (Assyrian Period) - chapters 1 - 39**

- a. Judgment of Judah - chapters 1 - 12
- b. Judgment of Nations - chapters 13 - 23
- c. Judgment of World - chapters 24 - 27
- d. Book of Woes - chapters 28-35
- e. Historical: Isaiah & Hezekiah - chapters 36 - 39

### **II. Prophecies of Peace (Babylonian Period) - chapters 40 - 66**

- a. The Lord vs. Idols - chapters 40 - 48
- b. The Servant of the Lord - chapters 49 - 57
- c. Future Glory - chapters 58 - 66



*Reading and Studying Isaiah*

**Commentary on the Book of Isaiah**

**by Dr. Adam Clarke<sup>3</sup>**

**Volume I. Book of Reproof and Promise, 1:1-6:13**

**Introduction**

**1. The Lord's case against Judah (first discourse)**

The prophet, with a boldness and majesty becoming the herald of the Most High, begins with calling on the whole creation to attend while Jehovah speaks, Isaiah 1:2. A charge of gross insensibility and ingratitude is then brought against the Jews, by contrasting their conduct with that of the ox and ass, the most stupid of animals, Isaiah 1:3. This leads to an amplification of their guilt, Isaiah 1:4; highly aggravated by their slighting the chastisements and judgments of God, though repeated till they had been left almost like Sodom and Gomorrah, Isaiah 1:5-9. The incidental mention of those places leads to an address to the rulers and people of the Jews, under the character of princes of Sodom, and people of Gomorrah, which is no less spirited and severe than elegant and

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<sup>3</sup> **Adam Clarke** (1760 or 1762–1832) was a British Methodist theologian and biblical scholar. He was born in the townland of Moybeg Kirley near Tobermore in Ireland.

unexpected, Isaiah 1:10. The vanity of trusting to the performance of the outward rites and ceremonies of religion is then exposed, Isaiah 1:11-15; and the necessity of repentance and reformation is strongly enjoined, Isaiah 1:16, Isaiah 1:17, and urged by the most encouraging promises as well as by the most awful threatened, Isaiah 1:18-20. But neither of these producing the proper effect on that people who were the prophet's charge, he bitterly laments their degeneracy, Isaiah 1:21-23; and concludes with introducing God, declaring his purpose of inflicting such heavy judgments as would entirely cut off the wicked, and excite in the righteous, who should also pass through the furnace, an everlasting shame and abhorrence of every thing connected with idolatry, the source of their misery, Isaiah 1:24-31.

Isaiah exercised the prophetic office during a long period of time, if he lived to the reign of Manasseh; for the lowest computation, beginning from the year in which Uzziah died, when some suppose him to have received his first appointment to that office, brings it to sixty-one years. But the tradition of the Jews, that he was put to death by Manasseh, is very uncertain; and one of their principal rabbins, Aben Ezra, Com. In Isaiah 1:1, seems rather to think that he died before Hezekiah, which is indeed more probable. It is however certain that he lived at least to the fifteenth or sixteenth year of Hezekiah; this makes the least possible term of the duration of his prophetic office about forty-eight years. The time of the delivery of some of his prophecies is either expressly marked, or sufficiently clear from the history to which they relate; that of a few others may with some probability be deduced from internal marks; from expressions, descriptions, and circumstances interwoven. It may therefore be of some use in this respect, and for the better understanding of his prophecies in general, to give here a summary view of the history of his time.

The kingdom of Judah seems to have been in a more flourishing condition during the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, than at any other time after the revolt of the ten tribes. The former recovered the port of Elath on the Red Sea, which the Edomites had taken in the reign of Joram. He was successful in his wars with the Philistines, and took from them several cities, Gath, Jabneh, Ashdod; as likewise against some people of Arabia Deserta, and against the Ammonites, whom he compelled to pay him tribute. He repaired and improved the fortifications of Jerusalem; and had a great army, well appointed and disciplined. He was no less attentive to the arts of peace; and very much encouraged agriculture, and the breeding of cattle. Jotham maintained the establishments and improvements made by his father; added to what Uzziah had done in strengthening the frontier places; conquered the Ammonites, who had revolted, and exacted from them a more stated and probably a larger tribute. However, at the latter end of his time,

the league between Pekah, king of Israel, and Rezin, king of Syria, was formed against Judah; and they began to carry their designs into execution.

But in the reign of Ahaz his son not only all these advantages were lost, but the kingdom of Judah was brought to the brink of destruction. Pekah king of Israel overthrew the army of Ahaz, who lost in battle one hundred and twenty thousand men; and the Israelites carried away captives two hundred thousand women and children, who however were released and sent home again upon the remonstrance of the prophet Oded. After this, as it should seem, (see Vitringa on Isaiah 7:2;), the two kings of Israel and Syria, joining their forces, laid siege to Jerusalem; but in this attempt they failed of success. In this distress Ahaz called in the assistance of Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, who invaded the kingdoms of Israel and Syria, and slew Rezin; but he was more in danger than ever from his too powerful ally; to purchase whose forbearance, as he had before bought his assistance, he was forced to strip himself and his people of all the wealth he could possibly raise from his own treasury, from the temple, and from the country. About the time of the siege of Jerusalem the Syrians took Elath, which was never after recovered. The Edomites likewise, taking advantage of the distress of Ahaz, ravaged Judea, and carried away many captives. The Philistines recovered what they had before lost; and took many places in Judea, and maintained themselves there. Idolatry was established by the command of the king in Jerusalem, and throughout Judea; and the service of the temple was either intermitted, or converted into an idolatrous worship.

Hezekiah, his son, on his accession to the throne, immediately set about the restoration of the legal worship of God, both in Jerusalem and through Judea. He cleansed and repaired the temple, and held a solemn service. He improved the city, repaired the fortification, erected magazines of all sorts, and built a new aqueduct. In the fourth year of his reign Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, invaded the kingdom of Israel, took Samaria, and carried away the Israelites into captivity, and replaced them by different people sent from his own country; and this was the final destruction of that kingdom, in the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah.

Hezekiah was not deterred by this alarming example from refusing to pay the tribute to the king of Assyria, which had been imposed on Ahaz: this brought on the invasion of Sennacherib in the fourteenth year of his reign, an account of which is inserted among the prophecies of Isaiah. After a great and miraculous deliverance from so powerful an enemy, Hezekiah continued his reign in peace. He prospered in all his works, and left his kingdom in a flourishing state to his son Manasseh – a son in every respect unworthy of such a father. See Lowth.

## Chapter 1

### Verse 1. Isaiah's preface

#### Verse 1

**The vision of Isaiah:** - It seems doubtful whether this title belongs to the whole book, or only to the prophecy contained in this chapter. The former part of the title seems properly to belong to this particular prophecy; the latter part, which enumerates the kings of Judah under whom Isaiah exercised his prophetic office, seems to extend it to the whole collection of prophecies delivered in the course of his ministry. Vitrina – to whom the world is greatly indebted for his learned labors on this prophet and to whom we should have owed much more if he had not so totally devoted himself to Masoretic authority – has, I think, very judiciously resolved this doubt. He supposes that the former part of the title was originally prefixed to this single prophecy; and that, when the collection of all Isaiah's prophecies was made, the enumeration of the kings of Judah was added, to make it at the same time a proper title to the whole book. As such it is plainly taken in 2 Chronicles 32:32, where the book of Isaiah is cited by this title: "The vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz."

The prophecy contained in this first chapter stands single and unconnected, making an entire piece of itself. It contains a severe remonstrance against the corruptions prevailing among the Jews of that time, powerful exhortations to repentance, grievous threatenings to the impenitent, and gracious promises of better times, when the nation shall have been reformed by the just judgments of God. The expression, upon the whole, is clear; the connection of the several parts easy; and in regard to the images, sentiments, and style, it gives a beautiful example of the prophet's elegant manner of writing; though perhaps it may not be equal in these respects to many of the following prophecies.

### Verses 2-6. The Lord's accusation

#### Verse 2

**Hear, O heavens "Hear, O ye heavens"** – God is introduced as entering into a public action, or pleading, before the whole world, against his disobedient people. The prophet, as herald or officer to proclaim the summons to the court, calls upon all created beings, celestial and terrestrial, to attend and bear witness to the truth of his plea and the justice of his cause. The same scene is more fully displayed in the noble exordium of Psalm 1:1-6, where God summons all mankind, from east to west, to be present to hear his appeal; and the solemnity is



held on Sion, where he is attended with the same terrible pomp that accompanied him on Mount Sinai: -

“A consuming fire goes before him

And round him rages a violent tempest:

He calleth the heavens from above.

And the earth, that he may contend in judgment with his people.”

*Psalm 50:3, Psalm 50:4.*

By the same bold figure, Micah calls upon the mountains, that is, the whole country of Judea, to attend to him, Isaiah 6:1, Isaiah 6:2; : -

“Arise, plead thou before the mountains,

And let the hills hear thy voice.

Hear, O ye mountains, the controversy of Jehovah;

And ye, O ye strong foundations of the earth:

For Jehovah hath a controversy with his people,

And he will plead his cause against Israel.”

With the like invocation, Moses introduces his sublime song, the design of which was the same as that of this prophecy, “to testify as a witness, against the Israelites,” for their disobedience, Deuteronomy 31:21; : -

“Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak;

And let the earth hear the words of my mouth.”

*Deuteronomy 32:1.*

This, in the simple yet strong oratorical style of Moses, is, “I call heaven and earth to witness against thee this day; life and death have I set before thee; the blessing and the curse: choose now life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed.” Deuteronomy 30:19. The poetical style, by an apostrophe, sets the personification in a much stronger light.

**Hath spoken “That speaketh”** – I render it in the present time, pointing it דבר dober . There seems to be an impropriety in demanding attention to a speech already delivered. But the present reading may stand, as the prophet may be here understood to declare to the people what the Lord had first spoken to him.

**I have nourished** - The Septuagint have ἐγεννησα, “I have begotten.” Instead of גדלתי giddalti, they read ילדתי yaladti ; the word little differing from the other, and perhaps more proper; which the Chaldee likewise seems to favor; “vocavi eos filios.” See Exodus 4:22; Jeremiah 31:9.

### Verse 3

**The ox knoweth** – An amplification of the gross insensibility of the disobedient Jews, by comparing them with the most heavy and stupid of all animals, yet not so insensible as they. Bochart has well illustrated the comparison, and shown the peculiar force of it. “He sets them lower than the beasts, and even than the most stupid of all beasts, for there is scarcely any more so than the ox and the ass. Yet these acknowledge their master; they know the manger of their lord; by whom they are fed, not for their own, but for his good; neither are they looked upon as children, but as beasts of burden; neither are they advanced to honors, but oppressed with great and daily labors. While the Israelites, chosen by the mere favor of God, adopted as sons, promoted to the highest dignity, yet acknowledged not their Lord and their God; but despised his commandments, though in the highest degree equitable and just.” Hieroz. i., Colossians 409.

Jeremiah’s comparison to the same purpose is equally elegant, but has not so much spirit and severity as this of Isaiah.

“Even the stork in the heavens knoweth her season;

And the turtle, and the swallow, and the crane, observe the time of their coming:

But my people doth not know the judgment of Jehovah.

*Jeremiah 8:7.*

Hosea has given a very elegant turn to the same image, in the way of metaphor or allegory: -

“I drew them with human cords, with the bands of love:

And I was to them as he that lifteth up the yoke upon their cheek;

And I laid down their fodder before them.”

*Hosea 11:4.*

Salomo ben Melech thus explains the middle part of the verse, which is somewhat obscure: “I was to them at their desire as they that have compassion on a heifer, lest she be overworked in ploughing; and that lift up the yoke from off her neck, and rest it upon her cheek that she may not still draw, but rest from her labor an hour or two in the day.”

**But Israel** – The Septuagint, Syriac, Aquila, Theodotion, and Vulgate, read וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל veyisrael, But Israel, adding the conjunction, which being rendered as an adversative, sets the opposition in a stronger light.

**Doth not know** –The same ancient versions agree in adding Me, which very properly answers, and indeed is almost necessarily required to answer, the words possessor and lord preceding. Ἰσραὴλ δὲ ΜΕ οὐκ ἐγνώ ; Sept. “Israel *autem me non hriveled*,” Vulg. Ἰσραὴλ δὲ ΜΟΥ οὐκ ἐγνώ ; Aquil., Theod. The testimony of so scrupulous an interpreter as Aquila is of great weight in this case. And both his and Theodotion’s rendering is such as shows plainly that they did not add the word ΜΟΥ to help out the sense, for it only embarrasses it. It also clearly determines what was the original reading in the old copies from which they translated. It could not be ידעני yedani, which most obviously answers to the version of the Septuagint and Vulgate, for it does not accord with that of Aquila and Theodotion. The version of these latter interpreters, however injudicious, clearly ascertains both the phrase, and the order of the words of the original Hebrew; it was וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אוֹתִי לֹא יָדַע veyisrael othi lo yada . The word אוֹתִי othi has been lost out of the text. The very same phrase is used by Jeremiah, Jeremiah 4:22, עַמִּי אוֹתִי לֹא יָדָע ammi othi lo yadau . And the order of the words must have been as above represented; for they have joined יִשְׂרָאֵל yisrael, with אוֹתִי othi, as *in regimine*; they could not have taken it in this sense, Israel *meus non hriveled*, had either this phrase or the order of the words been different. I have endeavored to set this matter in a clear light, as it is the first example of a whole word lost out of the text, of which the reader will find many other plain examples in the course of these notes. But Rosenmuller contends that this is unnecessary, as the passage may be translated, “Israel knows nothing: my people have no understanding.” The Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, read וַעֲמִי veammi, “and my people;” and so likewise sixteen MSS. Of Kennicott, and fourteen of De Rossi.

#### Verse 4

**Ah sinful nation “Degenerate”** - Five MSS., one of them ancient, read מִשְׁחָתִים moschathim, without the first י yod, in hophal corrupted, not corrupters. See the same word in the same form, and in the same sense, Proverbs 25:26.

**Are corrupters “Are estranged”** – Thirty-two MSS., five ancient, and two editions, read נָזְרוּ nazoru ; which reading determines the word to be from the root זָר zur, to alienate, not from נָזַר nazar, to separate; so Kimchi understands it. See also Annotat. In Noldium, 68.

**They are gone away backward “They have turned their backs upon him”** – So Kimchi explains it: “they have turned unto him the back and not the face.” See Jeremiah 2:27; Jeremiah 7:24. I have been forced to render this line paraphrastically; as the verbal translation, “they are estranged backward,” would have been unintelligible.

#### Verse 5

**Why should ye be stricken any more “On what part,” etc.?** – The Vulgate renders עַל מֶה al meh, *super quo*, (see Job 38:6; 2 Chronicles 32:10;), upon what part. And so Abendana on Sal. Den Melech: “There are some who explain it thus: Upon what limb shall you be smitten, if you add defection? For already for your sins have you been smitten upon all of them; so that there is not to be found in you a whole limb on which you can be smitten.” Which agrees with what follows: “From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it:” and the sentiment and image is exactly the same with that of Ovid, Pont. 2:7, 42: -

*Vix habet in nobis jam nova plaga locum.*

There is no place on you for a new stripe. Or that still more expressive line of Euripides; the great force and effect of which Longinus ascribes to its close and compressed structure, analogous to the sense which it expresses: -

ἔγεμω κακῶν δὴ κ' οὐκετ' ἐσθ' ὅπη τιθῆπ .

I am full of miseries: there's no room for more.

*Herc. Fur. 1245, Long. Sec. 40.*

“On what part will ye strike again? Will ye add correction?” This is addressed to the instruments of God's vengeance; those that inflicted the punishment, who or

whatsoever they were. *Ad verbum certae personae intelligendae sunt, quibus ista hrive quae per verbum exprimitur competit*; “The words are addressed to the persons who were the agents employed in the work expressed by the original word,” as Glassius says in a similar case, Philippians Sacr. 1:3, 22. See Isaiah 7:4.

As from ידע yada, דעה deah, knowledge; from יעץ yaats, עצה etsah, counsel; from ישן yeshan, שנה shenah, sleep, etc.; so from יסר yasar is regularly derived סרה sarah, correction.

**The whole head is sick** – The king and the priests are equally gone away from truth and righteousness. Or, The state is oppressed by its enemies, and the Church corrupted in its rulers and in its members.

## Verse 6

**They have not been closed, etc. “It hath not been pressed,” etc.** – The pharmaceutical art in the East consists chiefly in external applications: accordingly the prophet’s images in this place are all taken from surgery. Sir John Chardin, in his note on Proverbs 3:8, “It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones,” observes that “the comparison is taken from the plasters, ointments, oils, and frictions, which are made use of in the East upon the belly and stomach in most maladies. Being ignorant in the villages of the art of making decoctions and potions, and of the proper doses of such things, they generally make use of external medicines.” – Harmer’s Observations on Scripture, vol. 2 p. 488. And in surgery their materia medica is extremely simple, oil making the principal part of it. “In India,” says Tavernier, “they have a certain preparation of oil and melted grease, which they commonly use for the healing of wounds.” Voyage Ind. So the good Samaritan poured oil and wine on the wounds of the distressed Jew: wine, cleansing and somewhat astringent, proper for a fresh wound; oil, mollifying and healing, Luke 10:34. Kimchi has a judicious remark here: “When various medicines are applied, and no healing takes place, that disorder is considered as coming immediately from God.”

Of the three verbs in this sentence, one is in the singular number in the text; another is singular in two MSS., (one of them ancient), חבשה chubbashah ; and the Syriac and Vulgate render all of them in the singular number.

## Verses 7-9. The Lord's chastisement

### Verse 7

At the end of the verse, זרים zarim . This reading, though confirmed by all the ancient versions, gives us no good sense; for “your land is devoured by strangers; and is desolate, as if overthrown by strangers,” is a mere tautology, or, what is as bad, an identical comparison. Aben Ezra thought that the word in its present form might be taken for the same with זרם zerem, an inundation: Schultens is of the same opinion; (see Taylor's Concord.); and Schindler in his Lexicon explains it in the same manner: and so, says Zimchi, some explain it. Abendana endeavors to reconcile it to grammatical analogy in the following manner: “זרים zarim is the same with זרם zerem ; that is, as overthrown by an inundation of waters: and these two words have the same analogy as קדם kedem and קדים kadim . Or it may be a concrete of the same form with שכיר shechir ; and the meaning will be: as overthrown by rain pouring down violently, and causing a flood.” On Sal. Ben Melech, in loc. But I rather suppose the true reading to be זרם zerem, and have translated it accordingly: the word זרים zerim, in the line above, seems to have caught the transcriber's eye, and to have led him into this mistake. But this conjecture of the learned prelate is not confirmed by any MS. Yet discovered.

### Verses 7-9

**Your country is desolate** – The description of the ruined and desolate state of the country in these verses does not suit with any part of the prosperous times of Uzziah and Jotham. It very well agrees with the time of Ahaz, when Judea was ravaged by the joint invasion of the Israelites and Syrians, and by the incursions of the Philistines and Edomites. The date of this prophecy is therefore generally fixed to the time of Ahaz. But on the other hand it may be considered whether those instances of idolatry which are urged in Isaiah 1:29; - the worshipping in groves and gardens – having been at all times too commonly practiced, can be supposed to be the only ones which the prophet would insist upon in the time of Ahaz; who spread the grossest idolatry through the whole country, and introduced it even into the temple; and, to complete his abominations, made his son pass through the fire to Molech. It is said, 2 Kings 15:37, that in Jotham's time “the Lord began to send against Judah Rezin – and Pekah.” If we may suppose any invasion from that quarter to have been actually made at the latter end of Jotham's reign, I should choose to refer this prophecy to that time.

And your cities are burned. – Nineteen of Dr. Kennicott's MSS. And twenty-two of De Rossi's, some of my own, with the Syriac and Arabic, add the conjunction which makes the hemistich more complete.

## Verse 8

**As a cottage in a vineyard “As a shed in a vineyard”** – A little temporary hut covered with boughs, straw, turf, or the like materials, for a shelter from the heat by day, and the cold and dews by night, for the watchman that kept the garden or vineyard during the short season the fruit was ripening, (see Job 27:18;), and presently removed when it had served that purpose. See Harmer's Observ. 1:454. They were probably obliged to have such a constant watch to defend the fruit from the jackals. “The jackal,” (*chical* of the Turks), says Hasselquist, (Travels, p. 227), “is a species of *mustela* which is very common in Palestine, especially during the vintage; and often destroys whole vineyards, and gardens of cucumbers.” “There is also plenty of the *canis vulpes*, the fox, near the convent of St. John in the desert, about vintage time; for they destroy all the vines unless they are strictly watched.” Ibid. p. 184. See Song of Solomon 2:15.

Fruits of the gourd kind, melons, watermelons, cucumbers, etc., are much used and in great request in the Levant, on account of their cooling quality. The Israelites in the wilderness regretted the loss of the cucumbers and melons among the other good things of Egypt, Numbers 11:5. In Egypt the season of watermelons, which are most in request, and which the common people then chiefly live upon, lasts but three weeks. See Hasselquist, p. 256. Tavernier makes it of longer continuance :

*L'on y voit de grands carreaux de melons et de concombres, mais beaucoup plus de derniers, dont les Levantins font leur delices. Le plus souvent, ils les mangent sans les peter, après quoi ils vont boire une verre d'eau. Dans toute l'Asie c'est la nourriture ordinaire du petit peuple pendant trois ou quatre mois ; toute la famine en vit, et quand un enfant demande à manger, au lieu qu'en France ou ailleurs nous lui donnerions du pain, dans le Levant on lui présente un concombre, qu'il mange cru comme on le vient de cueillir. Les concombres dans le Levant ont une bonté particulière ; et quoiqu' on les mange crus, ils ne font jamais de mal ;*

“There are to be seen great beds of melons and cucumbers, but a greater number of the latter, of which the Levantines are particularly fond. In general they eat them without taking off the rind, after which they drink a glass of water. In every part of Asia this is the aliment of the common people for three or four months; the whole family live on them; and when a child asks something to eat,

instead of giving it a piece of bread, as is done in France and other countries, they present it with a cucumber, which it eats raw, as gathered. Cucumbers in the Levant are peculiarly excellent; and although eaten raw, they are seldom injurious.” Tavernier, Relat. Du Serrail, cap. Xix.

**As a lodge, etc.** – That is, after the fruit was gathered; the lodge being then permitted to fall into decay. Such was the desolate, ruined state of the city.

So the ὡς πολις πολιορκουμένη ; Septuagint: see also the Vulgate.

## Verse 9

**The Lord of hosts “Jehovah God of hosts”** – As this title of God, יהוה צבאות Yehovah tsebaoth, “Jehovah of hosts, occurs here for the first time, I think it proper to note, that I translate it always, as in this place, “Jehovah God of hosts;” taking it as an elliptical expression for יהוה אלהי צבאות Yehovah Elohey tsebaoth . This title imports that Jehovah is the God or Lord of hosts or armies; as he is the Creator and Supreme Governor of all beings in heaven and earth, and disposeth and ruleth them all in their several orders and stations; the almighty, universal Lord.

**We should have been as Sodom** – As completely and finally ruined as that and the cities of the plain were, no vestige of which remains at this day.

## Verses 10-15. The Lord’s rejection of their religious externalism

### Verse 10

**Ye rulers of Sodom “Ye princes of Sodom”** – The incidental mention of Sodom and Gomorrah in the preceding verse suggested to the prophet this spirited address to the rulers and inhabitants of Jerusalem, under the character of princes of Sodom and people of Gomorrah. Two examples of a sort of elegant turn of the like kind may be observed in St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans, Romans 15:4, Romans 15:5, Romans 15:12, Romans 15:13. See Locke on the place; and see Isaiah 1:29, Isaiah 1:30, of this chapter, which gives another example of the same.

And – like unto Gomorrah. – The ך vau is added by thirty-one of Kennicott’s MSS., twenty-nine of De Rossi’s and one, very ancient, of my own. See note on Isaiah 1:6; (note).



## Verse 11

**To what purpose, etc. “What have I to do”** – The prophet Amos has expressed the same sentiments with great elegance: -

I hate, I despise your feasts;

And I will not delight in the odour of your solemnities:

Though ye offer unto me burnt-offerings

And your meat-offerings, I will not accept:

Neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fatlings.

Take away from me the noise of your songs;

And the melody of your viols I will not hear.

But let judgment roll down like waters;

And righteousness like a mighty stream.

*Amos 5:21-24.*

So has Persius; see Sat. 2 v. 71-75: -

« *Quin damus id Superis, de magna quod dare lanae,* » etc.

The two or three last pages of Plato's Euthyphro contain the same idea. Sacrifices and prayers are not profitable to the offerer, nor acceptable to the gods, unless accompanied with an upright life.

**The fat of fed beasts, etc.** – The fat and the blood are particularly mentioned, because these were in all sacrifices set apart to God. The fat was always burnt upon the altar, and the blood was partly sprinkled, differently on different occasions, and partly poured out at the bottom of the altar. See Leviticus 4.

## Verse 12

**When ye come to appear** – Instead of לראות leraoth, to appear, one MS. Has לראות liroth, to see. See De Rossi. The appearing before God here refers chiefly to the three solemn annual festivals. See Exodus 23:14.

**Tread my courts (no more)** – So the Septuagint divide the sentence, joining the end of this verse to the beginning of the next: Πατειν την αυλην μου, ου προσθησεσθε ; “To tread my court ye shall not add – ye shall not be again accepted in worship.”

### Verse 13

**The new moons and Sabbaths “The fast and the day of restraint”** – און ועצרה aven vaatsarah . These words are rendered in many different manners by different interpreters, to a good and probable sense by all; but I think by none in such a sense as can arise from the phrase itself, agreeably to the idiom of the Hebrew language. Instead of און aven, the Septuagint manifestly read צום tsom, νηστειαν, “the fast.” This Houbigant has adopted. The prophet could not well have omitted the fast in the enumeration of their solemnities, nor the abuse of it among the instances of their hypocrisy, which he has treated at large with such force and elegance in his fifty-eighth chapter. Observe, also, that the prophet Joel, ( Joel 1:14, and Joel 2:15;), twice joins together the fast and the day of restraint: -

קדשו צום קראו עצרה atsarah kiru tsom kaddeshu

“Sanctify a fast; proclaim a day of restraint:”

which shows how properly they are here joined together. עצרה atsarah, “the restraint,” is rendered, both here and in other places of our English translation, “the solemn assembly.” Certain holy days ordained by the law were distinguished by a particular charge that “no servile work should be done therein;” Leviticus 23:36; Numbers 29:35; Deuteronomy 16:8. This circumstance clearly explains the reason of the name, the restraint, or the day of restraint, given to those days.

If I could approve of any translation of these two words which I have met with, it should be that of the Spanish version of the Old Testament, made for the use of the Spanish Jews: *Tortura y detenimento*, “it is a pain and a constraint unto me.” But I still think that the reading of the Septuagint is more probably the truth.

### Verse 15

**When ye spread** – The Syriac, Septuagint, and a MS., read בפרשכם beparshecem, without the conjunction וּvau .

**Your hands “For your hands”** – Αἱ γὰρ χεῖρες – *Sept. Manus enim vestrae* – Vulg. They seem to have read כִּי יְדַעְיָחֵם ki yedeychem .

## **Verses 16-20. The Lord’s call to repentance and reformation**

### **Verse 16**

**Wash you** – Referring to the preceding verse, “your hands are full of blood;” and alluding to the legal washing commanded on several occasions. See Leviticus 14:8, Leviticus 14:9, Leviticus 14:47.

### **Verse 17**

**Relieve the oppressed “Amend that which is corrupted”** – אָשֶׁרוֹ חֲמוּץ asheru chamots . In rendering this obscure phrase I follow Bochart, (*Hieroz.* Part i., lib. Ii., cap. 7), though I am not perfectly satisfied with this explication of it.

### **Verse 18**

**Though your sins be as scarlet** – שָׁנִי shani, “scarlet or crimson,” dibaphum, twice dipped, or double dyed; from שָׁנָה shanah, *iterare*, to double, or to do a thing twice. This derivation seems much more probable than that which Salmasius prefers from שָׁנָה hrive, *acuere*, to whet, from the sharpness and strength of the color, οἷον σφύγγιον ; תֵּלַע tela, the same; properly the worm, *vermiculus*, (from whence vermeil), for this color was produced from a worm or insect which grew in a coccus or excrescence of a shrub of the ilex kind, (see Plin. Nat. Hist. 16:8), like the cochineal worm in the opuntia of America. See Ulloa’s Voyage book v., chap. Ii., note to page 342. There is a shrub of this kind that grows in Provence and Languedoc, and produces the like insect, called the kermes oak, (see Miller, Dict. Quercus), from kermes, the Arabic word for this color, whence our word crimson is derived.

*“Neque amissos colores*

*Lana refert hrivele fuco,”*

says the poet, applying the same image to a different purpose. To discharge these strong colors is impossible to human art or power; but to the grace and power of God all things, even much more difficult are possible and easy. Some copies have כֶּשָׁנִים keshanim, “like crimson garments.”

**Though they be red, etc.** – But the conjunction וְ vau is added by twenty-one of Kennicott’s, and by forty-two of De Rossi’s MSS., by some early editions, with

the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic. It makes a fuller and more emphatic sense. “And though they be red as crimson,” etc.

### Verse 19

**Ye shall eat the good of the land** – Referring to Isaiah 1:7; : it shall not be “devoured by strangers.”

### Verse 20

**Ye shall be devoured with the sword “Ye shall be food for the sword”** – The Septuagint and Vulgate read תאכלכם tochalchem, “the sword shall devour you;” which is of much more easy construction than the present reading of the text.

The Chaldee seems to read בחרב אויב תאכלו bechereb oyeb teachelu, “ye shall be consumed by the sword of the enemy.” The Syriac also reads בחרב beehereb and renders the verb passively. And the rhythmus seems to require this addition. – Dr. Jubb.

### Verses 21-23. The Lord’s challenge to contrast Jerusalem

#### Verse 21

**Become a harlot** – See before, the Discourse on the Prophetic Style; and see Lowth’s Comment on the place, and De Sacr. Poes. Hebr. Prael. Xxxi.

#### Verse 22

**Wine mixed with water** – An image used for the adulteration of wines, with more propriety than may at first appear, if what Thevenot says of the people of the Levant of late times were true of them formerly. He says, “They never mingle water with their wine to drink; but drink by itself what water they think proper for abating the strength of the wine.” « *Lorsque les Persans boivent du vin, ils le prennent tout pur, a la façon des Levantins, qui ne le mêlent jamais avec de l’eau ; mais en buvant du vin, de temps en temps ils prennent un pot d’eau, et en boivent de grand traits.* » Voyage, part ii., 54 ii., chap. 10. « *Ils (les Turcs) n’y mêlent jamais d’eau, et se moquent des Chrétiens qui en mettent, ce qui leur semble tout a fait ridicule.* » Ibid. part i., chap. 24. “The Turks never mingle water with their wine, and laugh at the Christians for doing it, which they consider altogether ridiculous.”

It is remarkable that whereas the Greeks and Latins by mixed wine always understood wine diluted and lowered with water, the Hebrews on the contrary

generally mean by it wine made stronger and more inebriating by the addition of higher and more powerful ingredients, such as honey, spices, *defrutum*, (or wine inspissated by boiling it down to two-thirds or one-half of the quantity), myrrh, mandragora, opiates, and other strong drugs. Such were the exhilarating, or rather stupefying, ingredients which Helen mixed in the bowl together with the wine for her guests oppressed with grief to raise their spirits, the composition of which she had learned in Egypt: -

Αυτικ ‘ αρ ‘ εις οινον βαλε φαρμακον, ενθεν επινον,π

Νηπενθες τ ‘ αχολον τε, κακων επιληθον απαντων .

*Homer. Odyss. Lib. Iv., ver. 220.*

“Meanwhile, with genial joy to warm the soul,

Bright Helen mix’d a mirth-inspiring bowl;

Temper’d with drugs of sovereign use, to assuage

The boiling bosom of tumultuous rage:

Charm’d with that virtuous draught, the exalted mind

All sense of wo delivers to the wind.”

Such was the “spiced wine and the juice of pomegranates,” mentioned Song of Solomon 8:2. And how much the Eastern people to this day deal in artificial liquors of prodigious strength, the use of wine being forbidden, may be seen in a curious chapter of Kempfer upon that subject. *Amoen. Exot. Fasc. Iii., Obs. 15.*

Thus the drunkard is properly described, Proverbs 23:30, as one “that seeketh mixed wine,” and “is mighty to mingle strong drink,” Isaiah 5:22. And hence the poet took that highly poetical and sublime image of the cup of God’s wrath, called by Isaiah 51:17, the “cup of trembling,” causing intoxication and stupefaction, (see Chappelow’s note on Hariri, p. 33), containing, as St. John expresses in Greek the Hebrew idea with the utmost precision, though with a seeming contradiction in terms, κεκρασμενον ακρατον, *merum mixtum*, pure wine made yet stronger by a mixture of powerful ingredients; Revelation 14:10. “In the hand of Jehovah,” saith the psalmist, Psalm 75:8, “there is a cup, and the wine is turbid: it is full of a mixed liquor, and he poureth out of it,” or rather, “he poureth it out of one vessel into another,” to mix it perfectly, according to the reading expressed by the ancient versions, ויגר מזה אל זה *vaiyagger mizzeh al*

zeh, and he pours it from this to that, “verily the dregs thereof,” the thickest sediment of the strong ingredients mingled with it, “all the ungodly of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.”

R. D. Kimchi says, “The current coin was adulterated with brass, tin, and other metals, and yet was circulated as good money. The wine also was adulterated with water in the taverns, and sold notwithstanding for pure wine.”

### **Verse 23**

**Companions of thieves “Associates”** – The Septuagint, Vulgate, and four MSS., read חֲבֵרֵי chabrey without the conjunction וּ vau .

### **Verses 24-31. The Lord’s promised restoration of Jerusalem**

#### **Verse 24**

**Ah, I will ease me “Aha! I will be eased”** – Anger, arising from a sense of injury and affront, especially from those who, from every consideration of duty and gratitude, ought to have behaved far otherwise, is an uneasy and painful sensation: and revenge, executed to the full on the offenders, removes that uneasiness, and consequently is pleasing and quieting, at least for the present. Ezekiel, Ezekiel 5:13, introduces God expressing himself in the same manner: -

“And mine anger shall be fully accomplished;

And I will make my fury rest upon them;

And I will give myself ease.”

This is a strong instance of the metaphor called anthropopathia, by which, throughout the Scriptures, as well the historical as the poetical parts, the sentiments sensations, and affections, the bodily faculties qualities, and members, of men, and even of brute animals, are attributed to God, and that with the utmost liberty and latitude of application. The foundation of this is obvious; it arises from necessity; we have no idea of the natural attributes of God, of his pure essence, of his manner of existence, of his manner of acting: when therefore we would treat on these subjects, we find ourselves forced to express them by sensible images. But necessity leads to beauty; this is true of metaphor in general, and in particular of this kind of metaphor, which is used with great elegance and sublimity in the sacred poetry; and what is very remarkable, in the grossest instances of the application of it, it is generally the most striking and the most sublime. The reason seems to be this: when the images are taken from the

superior faculties of the human nature, from the purer and more generous affections, and applied to God, we are apt to acquiesce in the notion; we overlook the metaphor, and take it as a proper attribute; but when the idea is gross and offensive as in this passage of Isaiah, where the impatience of anger and the pleasure of revenge is attributed to God, we are immediately shocked at the application; the impropriety strikes us at once, and the mind, casting about for something in the Divine nature analogous to the image, lays hold on some great, obscure, vague idea, which she endeavors to comprehend, and is lost in immensity and astonishment. See De Sacr. Poesi. Hebr. Prael. 16 sub. Fin., where this matter is treated and illustrated by examples.

### Verse 25

**I will turn my hand upon thee** – So the common version; and this seems to be a metaphor taken from the custom of those who, when the metal is melted, strike off the scoriae with their hand previously to its being poured out into the mould. I have seen this done with the naked hand, and no injury whatever sustained.

**Purge away thy dross “In the furnace”** – The text has כבֹּר cabbor, which some render “as with soap;” as if it were the same with כְּבוֹרִית keborith; so Kimchi; but soap can have nothing to do with the purifying of metals. Others, “according to purity,” or “purely,” as our version. Le Clerc conjectured that the true reading is כְּכוּר kechur, “as in the furnace;” see Ezekiel 22:18, Ezekiel 22:20. Dr. Durell proposes only a transposition of letters בכֹּר to the same sense; and so likewise Archbishop Secker. That this is the true reading is highly probable.

### Verse 26

**I will restore** – “This,” says Kimchi, “shall be in the days of the Messiah, in which all the wicked shall cease, and the remnant of Israel shall neither do iniquity, nor speak lies.” What a change must this be among Jews!

**Afterward “And after this”** – The Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and eighteen MSS., and one of my own, very ancient, add the conjunction וַּvau, And.

### Verse 27

**With judgment “In judgment”** – By the exercise of God’s strict justice in destroying the obdurate, (see Isaiah 1:28;), and delivering the penitent in righteousness; by the truth and faithfulness of God in performing his promises.”

## Verse 29

**For they shall be ashamed of the oaks “For ye shall be ashamed of the ilexes”** – Sacred groves were a very ancient and favorite appendage of idolatry. They were furnished with the temple of the god to whom they were dedicated, with altars, images, and every thing necessary for performing the various rites of worship offered there; and were the scenes of many impure ceremonies, and of much abominable superstition. They made a principal part of the religion of the old inhabitants of Canaan; and the Israelites were commanded to destroy their groves, among other monuments of their false worship. The Israelites themselves became afterwards very much addicted to this species of idolatry.

“When I had brought them into the land,  
Which I swore that I would give unto them;  
Then they saw every high hill and every thick tree;  
And there they slew their victims;  
And there they presented the provocation of their offerings;  
And there they placed their sweet savor;  
And there they poured out their libations.”

*Ezekiel 20:28.*

“On the tops of the mountains they sacrifice;  
And on the hills they burn incense;  
Under the oak and the poplar;  
And the ilex, because her shade is pleasant.”

*Hosea 4:13.*

Of what particular kinds the trees here mentioned are, cannot be determined with certainty. In regard to אֵלֶּה *ellah*, in this place of Isaiah, as well as in Hosea, Celsius (Hierobot.) understands it of the terebinth, because the most ancient interpreters render it so; in the first place the Septuagint. He quotes eight places; but in three of these eight places the copies vary, some having δρυς, the oak,



instead of *τερεβινθος*, the terebinth or turpentine tree. And he should have told us, that these same seventy render it in sixteen other places by *δρυς*, the oak; so that their authority is really against him; and the Septuagint, “stant pro quercu,” contrary to what he says at first setting out. Add to this that Symmachus, Theodotion, and Aquila, generally render it by *δρυς*, the oak; the latter only once rendering it by *τερεβινθος*, the terebinth. His other arguments seem to me not very conclusive; he says, that all the qualities of *אלה* ellah agree to the terebinth, that it grows in mountainous countries, that it is a strong tree, long-lived, large and high, and deciduous. All these qualities agree just as well to the oak, against which he contends; and he actually attributes them to the oak in the very next section. But I think neither the oak nor the terebinth will do in this place of Isaiah, from the last circumstance which he mentions, their being deciduous, where the prophet’s design seems to me to require an evergreen, otherwise the casting of its leaves would be nothing out of the common established course of nature, and no proper image of extreme distress and total desolation, parallel to that of a garden without water, that is, wholly burnt up and destroyed. An ancient, who was an inhabitant and a native of this country, understands it in like manner of a tree blasted with uncommon and immoderate heat; *velut arbores, cum hrive aestu torrente decusserunt*. Ephrem Syr. In loc., edit. Assemani. Compare Psalm 1:4; Jeremiah 17:8. Upon the whole I have chosen to make it the ilex, which word Vossius, Etymolog., derives from the Hebrew *אלה* ellah, that whether the word itself be rightly rendered or not, I might at least preserve the propriety of the poetic image. – L.

By the ilex the learned prelate means the holly, which, though it generally appears as a sort of shrub, grows, in a good soil, where it is unmolested, to a considerable height. I have one in my own garden, rising three stems from the root, and between twenty and thirty feet in height. It is an evergreen.

**For they shall be ashamed “For ye shall be ashamed”** – תבושו *teboshu*, in the second person, Vulgate, Chaldee, three MSS., one of my own, ancient, and one edition; and in agreement with the rest of the sentence.

### Verse 30

**Whose leaf “Whose leaves”** – Twenty-six of Kennicott’s, twenty-four of De Rossi’s, one ancient, of my own, and seven editions, read *אליה* *aleyha*, in its full and regular form. This is worth remarking, as it accounts for a great number of anomalies of the like kind, which want only the same authority to rectify them.

**As a garden that hath no water “A garden wherein is no water”** – In the hotter parts of the Eastern countries, a constant supply of water is so absolutely

necessary for the cultivation and even for the preservation and existence of a garden, that should it want water but for a few days, every thing in it would be burnt up with the heat, and totally destroyed. There is therefore no garden whatever in those countries but what has such a certain supply, either from some neighboring river, or from a reservoir of water collected from springs, or filled with rain water in the proper season, in sufficient quantity to afford ample provision for the rest of the year.

Moses, having described the habitation of man newly created as a garden planted with every tree pleasant to the sight and good for food, adds, as a circumstance necessary to complete the idea of a garden, that it was well supplied with water, “And a river went out of Eden to water the garden;” Genesis 2:10; : see also Genesis 13:10.

That the reader may have a clear notion of this matter, it will be necessary to give some account of the management of their gardens in this respect.

“Damascus,” says Maundrell, p. 122, “is encompassed with gardens, extending no less, recording to common estimation, than thirty miles round; which makes it look like a city in a vast wood. The gardens are thick set with fruit trees of all kinds, kept fresh and verdant by the waters of the Barrady, (the Chrysorrhoeas of the ancients), which supply both the gardens and city in great abundance. This river, as soon as it issues out from between the cleft of the mountain before mentioned into the plain, is immediately divided into three streams; of which the middlemost and biggest runs directly to Damascus, and is distributed to all the cisterns and fountains of the city. The other two (which I take to be the work of art) are drawn round, one to the right hand, and the other to the left, on the borders of the gardens, into which they are let as they pass, by little currents, and so dispersed all over the vast wood, insomuch that there is not a garden but has a fine quick stream running through it. The Barrady is almost wholly drunk up by the city and gardens. What small part of it escapes is united, as I was informed, in one channel again on the southeast side of the city; and, after about three or four hours’ course finally loses itself in a bog there, without ever arriving at the sea.” This was likewise the case in former times, as Strabo, lib. Xvi., Pliny, lib. 5:18, testify; who say, “that this river was expended in canals, and drunk up by watering the place.”

“The best sight,” says the same Maundrell, p. 39, “that the palace of the emir of Beroot, anciently Berytus, affords, and the worthiest to be remembered, is the orange garden. It contains a large quadrangular plat of ground, divided into sixteen lesser squares, four in a row, with walks between them. The walks are shaded with orange trees of a large spreading size. Every one of these sixteen

lesser squares in the garden was bordered with stone; and in the stone work were troughs, very artificially contrived, for conveying the water all over the garden; there being little outlets cut at every tree for the stream as it passed by to flow out and water it.” The royal gardens at Ispahan are watered just in the same manner, according to Kempfer’s description, Amoen. Exot., p. 193.

This gives us a clear idea of the פלגי מים palgey mayim, mentioned in the first Psalm, and other places of Scripture, “the divisions of waters,” the waters distributed in artificial canals; for so the phrase properly signifies. The prophet Jeremith, chap. 17:8, has imitated, and elegantly amplified, the passage of the psalmist above referred to: -

“He shall be like a tree planted by the water side,  
And which sendeth forth her roots to the aqueduct.  
She shall not fear, when the heat cometh;  
But her leaf shall be green;  
And in the year of drought she shall not be anxious,  
Neither shall she cease from bearing fruit.”

From this image the son of Sirach, Ecclesiasticus 24:30, 31, has most beautifully illustrated the influence and the increase of religious wisdom in a well prepared heart.

“I also come forth as a canal from a river,  
And as a conduit flowing into a paradise.  
I said, I will water my garden,  
And I will abundantly moisten my border:  
And, lo! My canal became a river,  
And my river became a sea.”

This gives us the true meaning of the following elegant proverb, Proverbs 21:1; :  
-

“The heart of the king is like the canals of waters in the hand of Jehovah; Whithersoever it pleaseth him, he inclineth it.”

The direction of it is in the hand of Jehovah, as the distribution of the water of the reservoir through the garden by different canals is at the will of the gardener.

*“Et, cum exustus ager morientibus aestuat herbis,*

*Ecce supercilio clivosi tramitis undam*

*Elicit: illa cadens raucum per levia murmur*

*Saxa ciet, scatebrisque arentia temperat arva.”*

*Virg., Georg. 1:107.*

“Then, when the fiery suns too fiercely play,

And hriveled herbs on withering stems decay,

The wary ploughman on the mountain’s brow

Undams his watery stores; huge torrents flow;

And, rattling down the rocks, large moisture yield,

Tempering the thirsty fever of the field.”

*Dryden.*

Solomon, Ecclesiastes 2:1, Ecclesiastes 2:6, mentions his own works of this kind: -

“I made me gardens, and paradises;

And I planted in them all kinds of fruit trees.

I made me pools of water,

To water with them the grove flourishing with trees.”

Maundrell, p. 88, has given a description of the remains, as they are said to be, of these very pools made by Solomon, for the reception and preservation of the

waters of a spring, rising at a little distance from them; which will give us a perfect notion of the contrivance and design of such reservoirs.

“As for the pools, they are three in number, lying in a row above each other; being so disposed that the waters of the uppermost may descend into the second, and those of the second into the third. Their figure is quadrangular, the breadth is the same in all, amounting to about ninety paces. In their length there is some difference between them; the first being about one hundred and sixty paces long, the second, two hundred, and the third, two hundred and twenty. They are all lined with wall and plastered; and contain a great depth of water.”

The immense works which were made by the ancient kings of Egypt for recovering the waters of the Nile, when it overflowed, for such uses, are well known. But there never was a more stupendous work of this kind than the reservoir of Saba, or Merab, in Arabia Felix. According to the tradition of the country, it was the work of Balkis, that queen of Sheba who visited Solomon. It was a vast lake formed by the collection of the waters of a torrent in a valley, where, at a narrow pass between two mountains, a very high mole or dam was built. The water of the lake so formed had near twenty fathoms depth; and there were three sluices at different heights, by which, at whatever height the lake stood, the plain below might be watered. By conduits and canals from these sluices the water was constantly distributed in due proportion to the several lands; so that the whole country for many miles became a perfect paradise. The city of Saba, or Merab, was situated immediately below the great dam; a great flood came, and raised the lake above its usual height; the dam gave way in the middle of the night; the waters burst forth at once, and overwhelmed the whole city, with the neighboring towns and people. The remains of eight tribes were forced to abandon their dwellings, and the beautiful valley became a morass and a desert. This fatal catastrophe happened long before the time of Mohammed, who mentions it in the Koran, chap. 34: ver. 15. See also Sale, Prelim. S. 1 p. 10, and Michaelis, Quest. Aux Voyag. Daniel No. 94. Niebuhr, Descrip. De l'Arabie. P. 240.

## **Chapter 2**

### **2. Jerusalem and the Day of the Lord (second discourse)**

#### **Introduction**

Prophecy concerning the kingdom of the Messiah, and the conversion of the Gentile world, Isaiah 2:1-5. Great wickedness and idolatry of the unbelieving Jews, Isaiah 2:6-9. Terrible consternation that will seize the wicked, who shall in

vain seek for rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of God in the day of his judgments, Isaiah 2:10-17. Total destruction of idolatry in consequence of the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, Isaiah 2:18-21. An exhortation to put no confidence in man, Isaiah 2:22.

The prophecy contained in the second, third, and fourth chapters, makes one continued discourse. The first five verses of chap. 2 foretell the kingdom of Messiah, the conversion of the Gentiles, and their admission into it. From the sixth verse to the end of the second chapter is foretold the punishment of the unbelieving Jews for their idolatrous practices, their confidence in their own strength, and distrust of God's protection; and moreover the destruction of idolatry, in consequence of the establishment of Messiah's kingdom. The whole of the third chapter, with the first verse of the fourth, is a prophecy of the calamities of the Babylonian invasion and captivity; with a particular amplification of the distress of the proud and luxurious daughters of Sion; Isaiah 4:2-6; promises to the remnant, which shall have escaped this severe purgation, a future restoration to the favor and protection of God.

This prophecy was probably delivered in the time of Jotham, or perhaps in that of Uzziah, as Isaiah is said to have prophesied in his reign; to which time not any of his prophecies is so applicable as that of these chapters. The seventh verse of the second, and the latter part of the third chapter, plainly point out times in which riches abounded, and luxury and delicacy prevailed. Plenty of silver and gold could only arise from their commerce; particularly from that part of it which was carried on by the Red Sea. This circumstance seems to confine the prophecy within the limits above mentioned, while the port of Elath was in their hands; it was lost under Ahaz, and never recovered.



## Verses 1-5. Jerusalem the center of the earth in the kingdom age

### Verse 2

**In the last days "In the latter days"** - "Wherever the latter times are mentioned in Scripture, the days of the Messiah are always meant," says Kimchi on this place: and, in regard to this place, nothing can be more clear and certain. And the mountain of the Lord's house, says the same author, is Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built. The prophet Micah, Micah 4:1-4, has repeated this prophecy of the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, and of its progress to universality and perfection, in the same words, with little and hardly any material variation: for as he did not begin to prophesy till Jotham's time, and this seems to be one of the first of Isaiah's prophecies, I suppose Micah to have taken it from hence. The variations, as I said, are of no great importance.

Isaiah 2:2. הוא hu, after ונשא venissa, a word of some emphasis, may be supplied from Micah, if dropped in Isaiah. An ancient MS. has it here in the margin. It has in like manner been lost in Isaiah 53:4; (note), and in Psalm 22:29, where it is supplied by the Syriac, and Septuagint. Instead of כל הגוים col haggoyim, all the nations, Micah has only עמים ammim, peoples; where the Syriac has כל עמים col ammim, all peoples, as probably it ought to be.

Isaiah 2:3. For the second אל el, read ואל veel, seventeen MSS., one of my own, ancient, two editions, the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, Chaldee, and so Micah, Micah 4:2.

Isaiah 2:4. Micah adds עד רחוק ad rachok, afar off, which the Syriac also reads in this parallel place of Isaiah. It is also to be observed that Micah has improved the passage by adding a verse, or sentence, ( Micah 4:4;) for imagery and expression worthy even of the elegance of Isaiah: -

"And they shall sit every man under his vine,

And under his fig tree, and none shall affright them:

For the mouth of Jehovah, God of hosts, hath spoken it."

The description of well established peace, by the image of "beating their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks," is very poetical. The Roman poets have employed the same image, Martial, 14:34. "*Falx ex ense.*"

*"Pax me certa ducis placidos curvavit in usus:*

*Agricolae nunc sum; militis ante fui."*

"Sweet peace has transformed me. I was once the property of the soldier, and am now the property of the husbandman."

The prophet Joel, Joel 3:10, hath reversed it, and applied it to war prevailing over peace: -

"Beat your ploughshares into swords,

And your pruning-hooks into spears."

And so likewise the Roman poets: -

*- Non ullus aratro*

*Dignus honos: squalent abductis arva colonis,*

*Et curvae rigidum falces conflantur in ensem.*

*Virg., Georg. 1:506.*

"Agriculture has now no honor: the husbandmen being taken away to the wars, the fields are overgrown with weeds, and the crooked sickles are straightened into swords."

*Bella diu tenuere viros: erat aptior ensis*



*Vomere: cedebat taurus arator equo*

*Sarcula cessabant; versique in pila ligones;*

*Factaque de ratri pondere cassis erat.*

*Ovid, Fast. 1:697.*

"War has lasted long, and the sword is preferred to the plough. The bull has given place to the war-horse; the weeding-hooks to pikes; and the harrow-pins have been manufactured into helmets."

The prophet Ezekiel, Ezekiel 17:22-24, has presignified the same great event with equal clearness, though in a more abstruse form, in an allegory; from an image, suggested by the former part of the prophecy, happily introduced, and well pursued: -

"Thus saith the Lord Jehovah:

I myself will take from the shoot of the lofty cedar,

Even a tender scion from the top of his scions will I pluck off:

And I myself will plant it on a mountain high and eminent.

On the lofty mountain of Israel will I plant it;

And it shall exalt its branch, and bring forth fruit,

And it shall become a majestic cedar:

And under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing;

In the shadow of its branches shall they dwell:

And all the trees of the field shall know,

That I Jehovah have brought low the high tree;

Have exalted the low tree;

Have dried up the green tree;

And have made the dry tree to flourish:

I Jehovah have spoken it, and will do it."

The word ונתתי venathatti, in this passage, Ezekiel 17:22, as the sentence now stands, appears incapable of being reduced to any proper construction or sense. None of the ancient versions acknowledge it, except Theodotion, and the Vulgate; and all but the latter vary very much from the present reading of this clause. Houbigant's correction of the passage, by reading instead of ונתתי venathatti, ויונקת veyoneketh, and a tender scion which is not very unlike it, perhaps better ויונק veyonek, with which the adjective רך rach will agree without alteration - is ingenious and probable; and I have adopted it in the above translation. - L.

### Verse 3

**To the house** - The conjunction ו vau is added by nineteen of Kennicott's, thirteen of De Rossi's MSS., one of my own, and two editions, the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, Arabic, and some copies of the Targum; And to the house. It makes the sentence more emphatic.

**He will teach us of his ways** - Unless God grant a revelation of his will, what can we know?

**We will walk in his paths** - Unless we purpose to walk in the light, of what use can that light be to us?

**For out of Zion shall go forth the law** - In the house of God, and in his ordinances only can we expect to hear the pure doctrines of revelation preached.

1. God alone can give a revelation of his own will.

- We must use the proper means in order to know this will.
- We should know it in order to do it.
- We should do it in order to profit by it.
- He who will not walk in the light when God vouchsafes it, shall be shut up in everlasting darkness.
- Every man should help his neighbour to attain that light, life, and felicity: "Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord."

#### Verse 4

**Neither shall they learn war any more** - If wars are necessary, how deep must that fall be that renders them so! But what a reproach to humanity is the trade of war! Men are regularly instructed in it, as in any of the necessary arts.

"How to dislodge most souls from their frail shrines

By bomb, sword, ball, and bayonet, is the art

Which some call great and glorious!"

And is this a necessary part of a finished education in civilized society? O Earth! Earth! Earth!

#### Verses 6-22. The Day of the Lord

##### Verse 6

**They be replenished "And they multiply"** - Seven MSS. and one edition, for יַשְׁפִּיקוּ yaspiku, read יַשְׁפִּיחוּ yaspichu, "and have joined themselves to the children of strangers;" that is, in marriage or worship. - Dr. Jubb. So Vulg., adhaeserunt. Compare Isaiah 14:1. But the very learned professor Chevalier Michaelis has explained the word יַשְׁפִּחוּ yesupachu, Job 30:7, (German translation, note on the place), in another manner; which perfectly well agrees with that place, and perhaps will be found to give as good a sense here. סָפִיחַ saphiach, the noun, means corn springing up, not from the seed regularly sown on cultivated land, but in the untilled field, from the scattered grains of the former harvest. This, by an easy metaphor, is applied to a spurious brood of children irregularly and casually begotten. The Septuagint seem to have understood the verb here in this sense, reading it as the Vulgate seems to have done. This justifies their version, which it is hard to account for in any other manner: και τεκνα πολλα αλλοφυλα εγενηθη αυτοις . Compare Hosea 5:7, and the Septuagint there. But instead of וּבִילְדֵי ubeyaldey, "and in the children," two of Kennicott's and eight of De Rossi's MSS. have וַכִּילְדֵי ucheyaldey, "and as the children." And they sin impudently as the children of strangers.

**And are soothsayers "They are filled with diviners"** - Hebrews "They are filled from the east;" or "more than the east." The sentence is manifestly imperfect. The Septuagint, Vulgate, and Chaldee, seem to have read כִּמְקֵדֶם kemikkedem ; and the latter, with another word before it, signifying idols; "they are filled with idols as from of old." Houbigant, for מִקְדֵּם mikkedem, reads מִקְסֵם mikkesem, as Brentius had proposed long ago. I rather think that both words

together give us the true reading: מִקְדֶּם mikkedem, מִקְסֶם mikkesem, "with divination from the east;" and that the first word has been by mistake omitted, from its similitude to the second.

### Verse 7

**Their land is also full of horses "And his land is filled with horses"** - This was in direct contradiction to God's command in the law: "But he (the king) shall not multiply horses to himself; nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses; neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold," Deuteronomy 17:16, Deuteronomy 17:17. Uzziah seems to have followed the example of Solomon, see 1 Kings 10:26-29, who first transgressed in these particulars; he recovered the port of Elath on the Red Sea, and with it that commerce which in Solomon's days had "made silver and gold as plenteous at Jerusalem as stones," 2 Chronicles 1:15. He had an army of 307,500 men, in which, as we may infer from the testimony of Isaiah, the chariots and horse made a considerable part. "The law above mentioned was to be a standing trial of prince and people, whether they had trust and confidence in God their deliverer." See Bp. Sherlock's Discourses on Prophecy. Dissert. iv., where he has excellently explained the reason and effect of the law, and the influence which the observance or neglect of it had on the affairs of the Israelites.

### Verse 8

**Their land also is full of idols "And his land is filled with idols"** - Uzziah and Fotham are both said, 2 Kings 15:3, 2 Kings 15:4, 2 Kings 15:34, 2 Kings 15:35, "to have done that which was right in the sight of the Lord;" that is, to have adhered to and maintained the legal worship of God, in opposition to idolatry and all irregular worship; for to this sense the meaning of that phrase is commonly to be restrained; "save that the high places were not removed where the people still sacrificed and burned incense." There was hardly any time when they were quite free from this irregular and unlawful practice, which they seem to have looked upon as very consistent with the true worship of God; and which seems in some measure to have been tolerated, while the tabernacle was removed from place to place, and before the temple was built. Even after the conversion of Manasseh, when he had removed the strange gods, commanded Judah to serve Jehovah the God of Israel, it is added, "Nevertheless the people did sacrifice still on the high places, yet unto Jehovah their God only," 2 Chronicles 33:17. The worshipping on the high places therefore does not necessarily imply idolatry; and from what is said of these two kings, Uzziah and Jotham, we may presume that the public exercise of idolatrous worship was not

permitted in their time. The idols therefore here spoken of must have been such as were designed for a private and secret use. Such probably were the teraphim so often mentioned in Scripture; a kind of household gods, of human form, as it should seem, (see 1 Samuel 19:13; (note), and compare Genesis 31:34; (note)), of different magnitude, used for idolatrous and superstitious purposes, particularly for divination, and as oracles, which they consulted for direction in their affairs.

### **Verse 9**

**Boweth down "Shall be bowed down"** - This has reference to the preceding verse. They bowed themselves down to their idols, therefore shall they be bowed down and brought low under the avenging hand of God.

**Therefore forgive them not** - "And thou wilt not forgive them." - L.

### **Verse 10**

**"When he ariseth to strike the earth with terror"** - On the authority of the Septuagint, confirmed by the Arabic and an ancient MS., I have added here to the text a line, which in the 19th and 21st verses ( Isaiah 2:19, Isaiah 2:21;) is repeated together with the preceding line, and has, I think, evidently been omitted by mistake in this place. The MS. here varies only in one letter from the reading of the other two verses; it has בארץ baarets, instead of הארץ haarets . None of De Rossi's MSS. confirm this addition. The line added is, When he ariseth to strike the earth with terror.

### **Verse 11**

**Be humbled** - "שפל ושה" shaphel veshach, read שפלו שה shaphelu shach ." - Dr. Durell. Which rectifies the grammatical construction. No MS. or version confirms this reading.

### **Verses 13-16**

**And upon all the cedars "Even against all the cedars"** - Princes, potentates, rulers, captains, rich men, etc. - So Kimchi. These verses afford us a striking example of that peculiar way of writing, which makes a principal characteristic of the parabolical or poetical style of the Hebrews, and in which the prophets deal so largely, namely, their manner of exhibiting things Divine, spiritual, moral, and political, by a set of images taken from things natural, artificial, religious, historical, in the way of metaphor or allegory. Of these nature

furnishes much the largest and the most pleasing share; and all poetry has chiefly recourse to natural images, as the richest and most powerful source of illustration. But it may be observed of the Hebrew poetry in particular, that in the use of such images, and in the application of them in the way of illustration and ornament, it is more regular and constant than any other poetry whatever; that it has for the most part a set of images appropriated in a manner to the explication of certain subjects. Thus you will find, in many other places besides this before us, that cedars of Lebanon and oaks of Bashan, are used in the way of metaphor and allegory for kings, princes, potentates of the highest rank; high mountains and lofty hills, for kingdoms, republics, states, cities; towers and fortresses, for defenders and protectors, whether by counsel or strength, in peace or war; ships of Tarshish and works of art, and invention employed in adorning them, for merchants, men enriched by commerce, and abounding in all the luxuries and elegances of life, such as those of Tyre and Sidon; for it appears from the course of the whole passage, and from the train of ideas, that the fortresses and the ships are to be taken metaphorically, as well as the high trees and the lofty mountains.

**Ships of Tarshish** - Are in Scripture frequently used by a metonymy for ships in general, especially such as are employed in carrying on traffic between distant countries, as Tarshish was the most celebrated mart of those times, frequented of old by the Phoenicians, and the principal source of wealth to Judea and the neighboring countries. The learned seem now to be perfectly well agreed that Tarshish is Tartessus, a city of Spain, at the mouth of the river Baetis, whence the Phoenicians, who first opened this trade, brought silver and gold, ( Jeremiah 10:9; Ezekiel 27:12;), in which that country then abounded; and, pursuing their voyage still farther to the Cassiterides, (Bogart, Canaan, 1 c. 39; Huet, Hist. de Commerce, p. 194), the islands of Scilly and Cornwall, they brought from thence lead and tin.

Tarshish is celebrated in Scripture, 2 Chronicles 8:17, 2 Chronicles 8:18; 2 Chronicles 9:21, for the trade which Solomon carried on thither, in conjunction with the Tyrians. Jehoshaphat, 1 Kings 22:48; 2 Chronicles 20:36, attempted afterwards to renew their trade. And from the account given of his attempt it appears that his fleet was to sail to Ezion-geber on the Red Sea; they must therefore have designed to sail round Africa, as Solomon's fleet had done before, (see Huet, Histoire de Commerce, p. 32), for it was a three years' voyage, ( 2 Chronicles 9:21;), and they brought gold from Ophir, probably on the coast of Arabia; silver from Tartessus; and ivory, apes, and peacocks, from Africa. **אופרי** Afri, Africa, the Roman termination, Africa terra. **תרשיש** Tarshish, some city or country in Africa. So the Chaldee on 1 Kings 22:49, where it renders **תרשיש**

Tarshish by אפריקה Aphricah ; and compare 2 Chronicles 20:36, from whence it appears, to go to Ophir and to Tarshish is one and the same thing." - Dr. Jubb.

It is certain that under Pharaoh Necho, about two hundred years afterwards, this voyage was made by the Egyptians; Herodot. 4:42. They sailed from the Red Sea, and returned by the Mediterranean, and they performed it in three years, just the same time that the voyage under Solomon had taken up. It appears likewise from Pliny, Nat. Hist., 2:67, that the passage round the Cape of Good Hope was known and frequently practiced before his time, by Hanno, the Carthaginian, when Carthage was in its glory; by one Eudoxus, in the time of Ptolemy Lathyrus, king of Egypt; and Coelus Antipater, a historian of good credit, somewhat earlier than Pliny, testifies that he had seen a merchant who had made the voyage from Gades to Ethiopia. The Portuguese under Vasco de Gama, near three hundred years ago, recovered this navigation, after it had been intermitted and lost for many centuries. - L.

### **Verse 18**

**Shall utterly abolish "Shall disappear"** - The ancient versions and an ancient MS. read יחלפו yachalpu, plural. One of my MSS. reads יחלוף yachaloph, probably a mistake for יחלפו yachalpu .

### **Verses 19-21**

**Into the holes of the rocks "Into caverns of rocks"** - The country of Judea being mountainous and rocky, is full of caverns, as appears from the history of David's persecution under Saul. At En-gedi, in particular, there was a cave so large that David with six hundred men hid themselves in the sides of it; and Saul entered the mouth of the cave without perceiving that any one was there, 1 Samuel 24. Josephus, Antiq., lib. xiv., c. 15, and Bell. Jud., lib. 1, c. 16, tells us of a numerous gang of banditti, who, having infested the country, and being pursued by Herod with his army retired into certain caverns almost inaccessible, near Arbela in Galilee, where they were with great difficulty subdued. Some of these were natural, others artificial. "Beyond Damascus," says Strabo, lib. xvi., "are two mountains called Trachones, from which the country has the name of Trachonitis; and from hence towards Arabia and Iturea, are certain rugged mountains, in which there are deep caverns, one of which will hold four thousand men." Tavernier, Voyage de Perse, part ii., chap. 4, speaks of a grot, between Aleppo and Bir, that would hold near three thousand horse. "Three hours distant from Sidon, about a mile from the sea, there runs along a high rocky mountain, in the sides of which are hewn a multitude of grots, all very little differing from each other. They have entrances about two feet square: on



the inside you find in most or all of them a room of about four yards square. There are of these subterranean caverns two hundred in number. It may, with probability at least, be concluded that these places were contrived for the use of the living, and not of the dead. Strabo describes the habitations of the Troglodytae to have been somewhat of this kind." - Maundrell, p. 118. The Horites, who dwelt in Mount Seir, were Troglodytae, as their name הָרִים horim, imports. But those mentioned by Strabo were on each side of the Arabian gulf. Mohammed (Koran, chap. 15 xxvi.) speaks of a tribe of Arabians, the tribe of Thamud, "who hewed houses out of the mountains, to secure themselves." Thus, "because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves and strong holds," Judges 6:2. To these they betook themselves for refuge in times of distress and hostile invasion: "When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, for the people were distressed, then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits," 1 Samuel 13:6, and see Jeremiah 41:9. Therefore "to enter into the rock, to go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth," was to them a very proper and familiar image to express terror and consternation. The prophet Hosea, Hosea 10:8, hath carried the same image farther, and added great strength and spirit to it:

"They shall say to the mountains, Cover us;

And to the hills, Fall on us;"

which image, together with these of Isaiah, is adopted by the sublime author of the Revelation, Revelation 6:15, Revelation 6:16, who frequently borrows his imagery from our prophet. - L.

## Verse 20

**Which they made each one for himself to worship "Which they have made to worship"** - The word לוּ lo, for himself, is omitted by two ancient MSS., and is unnecessary. It does not appear that any copy of the Septuagint has it, except MS. Pachom, and MS. 1. D. II., and they have ἑαυτοῖς, להם lahem, to themselves.

**To the moles** - They shall carry their idols with them into the dark caverns, old ruins, or desolate places, to which they shall flee for refuge; and so shall give them up, and relinquish them to the filthy animals that frequent such places, and have taken possession of them as their proper habitation. Bellonias, Greaves, P. Lucas, and many other travelers, speak of bats of an enormous size, as



inhabiting the Great Pyramid. See Harmer, Obs., vol. ii., 455. Three MSS. express חפרפרות chapharperoth, the moles as one word.

## Verse 22

**Cease ye from man** - Trust neither in him, nor in the gods that he has invented. Neither he, nor they, can either save or destroy.

## Chapter 3

### 2. Judah's sin and the Day of the Lord (second discourse)

#### Introduction

The whole of this chapter, with the first verse of the next, is a prophecy of those calamities that should be occasioned by the Babylonish invasion and captivity. These calamities are represented as so great and so general, that even royal honors, in such a state, are so far from being desirable, that hardly any can be got to accept them, Isaiah 3:1-7. This visitation is declared to be the consequence of their profanity and guilt; for which the prophet farther reproves and threatens them, Isaiah 3:8-15. Particular amplification of the distress of the delicate and luxurious daughters of Zion; whose deplorable situation is finely contrasted with their former prosperity and ease, Isaiah 3:16-26.

#### Chapters 2:1-4:6. Isaiah's second discourse

#### Verse 1

**The stay and the staff "Every stay and support"** - Hebrew, "the support masculine, and the support feminine:" that is, every kind of support, whether great or small, strong or weak. "Al Kanitz, wal-kanitzah; the wild beasts, male and female. Proverbially applied both to fishing and hunting: i.e., I seized the prey, great or little, good or bad. From hence, as Schultens observes, is explained Isaiah 3:1, literally, the male and female stay: i.e., the strong and weak, the great and small." - Chappelow, note on Hariri, Assembly 1. Compare Ecclesiastes 2:8.

The Hebrew words משען ומשענה mashen umashenah come from the same root שען shaan, to lean against, to incline, to support; and here, being masculine and feminine, they may signify all things necessary for the support both of man and woman. My old MS. understands the staff and stay as meaning particular persons, and translates the verse thus: - *Lo forsoth, the Lordschip Lord of*

*Hoostis schal don away fro Jerusalem and fro Juda the stalworth and the stronge.*

The two following verses, Isaiah 3:2, Isaiah 3:3, are very clearly explained by the sacred historian's account of the event, the captivity of Jehoiachin by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon: "And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths; none remained save the poorest sort of the people of the land," 2 Kings 24:14. Which is supplied by our version.

#### Verse 4

**I will give children to be their princes "I will make boys their princes" -** This also was fully accomplished in the succession of weak and wicked princes, from the death of Josiah to the destruction of the city and temple, and the taking of Zedekiah, the last of them, by Nebuchadnezzar.

**Babes shall rule over them -** *Dymennysche men schul lordschopen to hem.* - Old MS. Bible.

#### Verse 6

**Of the house of his father "Of his father's house" -** For בית beith, the house, the ancient interpreters seem to have read מביית mibbeith, from the house; του οικου του πατρος αυτου, Septuagint; domesticum patris sui, Vulgate; which gives no good sense. But the Septuagint MS. 1. D. 2: for οικου has ουκου . And, his brother, of his father's house, is little better than a tautology. The case seems to require that the man should apply to a person of some sort of rank and eminence; one that was the head of his father's house, (see Joshua 12:14;), whether of the house of him who applies to him, or of any other; ראש בית אביו rosh beith abaiu, the chief, or head of his father's house. I cannot help suspecting, therefore, that the word ראש rosh, head, chief, has been lost out of the text.

**Saying -** Before שמלה simlah, garment, two MSS., one ancient, and the Babylonish Talmud have the word לאמר lemor, saying; and so the Steptuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, and Chaldee. I place it with Houbigant, after שמלה simlah .

**Thou hast clothing "Take by the garment" -** That is, shall entreat him in an humble and supplicating manner. "Ten men shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, Let us go with you; for we have heard that God is with you," Zechariah 8:23. And so in Isaiah 4:1, the same gesture is used to express

earnest and humble entreaty. The behavior of Saul towards Samuel was of the same kind, when he laid hold on the skirt of his raiment, 1 Samuel 15:27. The preceding and following verses show, that his whole deportment, in regard to the prophet, was full of submission and humility.

**And let this ruin be under thy hand "And let thy hand support"** - Before יך tachath yadecha, a MS. adds תהיה tihyeh, "let it be;" another MS. adds in the same place, קחת בידך takach beyadecha, which latter seems to be a various reading of the two preceding words, making a very good sense: "Take into thy hand our ruinous state." Twenty-one MSS. of Kennicott's, thirteen of De Rossi's, one of my own, ancient, and three editions of the Babylonish Talmud have ידיך yadeycha, plural, "thy hands."

### Verse 7

**In that day shall he swear "Then shall he openly declare"** - The Septuagint, Syriac, and Jerome, read וישא veyissa, adding the conjunction, which seems necessary in this place.

**I will not be a healer** - I am noy a leche. - Old MS. Bible. Leech was the ancient English word for a physician.

**For in my house is neither bread nor clothing "For in my house is neither bread nor raiment"** - "It is customary through all the East," says Sir J. Chardin, "to gather together an immense quantity of furniture and clothes; for their fashions never alter." Princes and great men are obliged to have a great stock of such things in readiness for presents upon all occasions. "The kings of Persia," says the same author, "have great wardrobes, where there are always many hundreds of habits ready, designed for presents, and sorted," Harmer, Observ., 2:11 and 88. A great quantity of provision for the table was equally necessary. The daily provision for Solomon's household, whose attendants were exceedingly numerous, was proportionately great, 1 Kings 4:22, 1 Kings 4:23. Even Nehemiah, in his strait circumstances, had a large supply daily for his table; at which he received a hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, besides those that came from among the neighboring heathen, Nehemiah 5:17, Nehemiah 5:18.

This explains the meaning of the excuse made by him that is desired to undertake the government. He alleges that he has not wherewithal to support the dignity of the station, by such acts of liberality and hospitality as the law of custom required of persons of superior rank. See Harmer's Observations, 1:340, 2:88.

## Verse 8

**The eyes "The cloud"** - This word appears to be of very doubtful form, from the printed editions, the MSS., and the ancient versions. The first yod in עיני eyney, which is necessary according to the common interpretation, is in many of them omitted; the two last letters are upon a rasure in two MSS. I think it should be ענן anan, "a cloud," as the Syriac reads; and the allusion is to the cloud in which the glory of the Lord appeared above the tabernacle; see Exodus 16:9, Exodus 16:10; Exodus 40:34-38; Numbers 16:41, Numbers 16:42.

Either of the readings gives a very good sense. The allusion may be to the cloud of the Divine presence in the wilderness: or the eyes of the Lord may be meant, as they are in every place beholding the evil and the good. And he cannot look upon iniquity but with abhorrence; therefore, the eyes of his glory might be well provoked by their crimes.

## Verse 9

**The show of their countenance** - Bishop Lowth has it the steadfastness of their countenance - they appear to be bent on iniquity, their eyes tell the wickedness of their hearts. The eye is the index of the mind. Envy, hatred, malice, malevolence, concupiscence, and murder, when in the heart, look most intelligently out at the eye. They tell the innocent to be on their guard; and serve the same purpose as the sonorous rings in the tail of the rattlesnake - they announce the presence of the destroyer.

**They declare their sin as Sodom** - Impure propensities are particularly legible in the eyes: whoever has beheld the face of a debauchee or a prostitute knows this; of these it may be said, they wish to appear what they really are. They glory in their iniquity. This is the highest pitch of ungodliness.

**They have rewarded evil unto themselves** - Every man's sin is against his own soul. Evil awaiteth sinners - and he that offends his God injures himself.

## Verse 10

**Say ye to the righteous** - לצדיק letsaddik, the ל lamed is added here by one MS. and the Chaldee. The righteous is the person,

1. Who fears God.
- Departs from evil.

- Walks according to the testimony of God.
- And expects and prepares for a glorious immortality. "Pronounce ye." - The reading of this verse is very dubious. The Septuagint for אמרו imru read נאסר neasor, or both, נאסר אמרו imru neasor, and כי לא טוב לנו ki lo tob lanu . Δησώμεν τον δακαιο, οτι δυσχερηστος ημιν εστι. Perhaps, for אמרו imru, the true reading may be אשרו ashsheru, "bless you;" or אשרי imru ashrey, "say ye, blessed is." The Vulgate and an ancient MS. read in the singular number, יאכל yochel, comedat, "he shall eat."

"It shall be well with him:" - כי טוב ki tob, "that good." Say nothing to such but good. He is a good man, he does nothing but good, and has a good God to deal with, from whom he expects nothing but goodness. It shall be well with such in all circumstances of life.

#### 1. In prosperity.

- In adversity.
- In sickness.
- In health.
- In death.
- In judgment. And
- Through eternity In every case, occurrence, and circumstance, he shall eat the fruit of his doings - he shall derive benefit from being a righteous man, and walking in a righteous way.

Verse 11

**Woe unto the wicked** - לרשע lerasha, the man who is,

#### 1. Evil in his heart.

- Evil in his purposes.
- Evil in his life. As he is wicked, he does that which is wicked; and is influenced by the wicked one, of whom he is the servant and the son. It shall be ill with him, רע ra ; in a single word say to him - evil! Of him you can speak no good; and to him you can speak no good - all is evil, in him - before him - after him - round about him - above him - below him. Evil in time - evil through eternity!

**The reward of his hands** - What he has deserved he shall get. He shall be paid that for which he has labored, and his reward shall be in proportion to his work. O, what a lot is that of the wicked! Cursed in time, and accursed through eternity!

### Verse 12

**Err "Pervert"** - בלעו billeu, "swallow." Among many unsatisfactory methods of accounting for the unusual meaning of this word in this place, I choose Jarchi's explication, as making the best sense. "Read בללו billalu, 'confound.' Syriac." - Dr. Judd. "Read בהלו beholu, 'disturb or trouble.'" - Secker. So Septuagint. This verse might be read, "The collectors of grapes shall be their oppressors; and usurers (noshim, instead of nashim, women) shall rule over them."

### Verse 13

**The people "His people"** - עמו ammo, Septuagint.

### Verse 14

**The vineyard. "My vineyard"** - כרמי carmi, Septuagint, Chaldee, Jerome.

### Verse 15

**And grind the faces** - The expression and the image is strong, to denote grievous oppression but is exceeded by the prophet Micah, Micah 3:1-3; :-

"Hear, I pray you, ye chiefs of Jacob,

And ye princes of the house of Israel:

Is it not yours to know what is right?

Ye that hate good and love evil:

Who tear their skins from off them,

And their flesh from off their bones;

Who devour the flesh of my people;

And flay from off them their skin;

And their bones they dash in pieces;

And chop them asunder, as morsels for the pot:

And as flesh thrown into the midst of the caldron."

In the last line but one, for כֶּאֱשֶׁר keasher, read, by the transposition of a letter, כִּשֶׁר kisher, with the Septuagint and Chaldee.

## Verse 16

**And wanton eyes "And falsely setting off their eyes with paint" -** Hebrew, falsifying their eyes. I take this to be the true meaning and literal rendering of the word; from שָׁקַר shakar. The Masoretes have pointed it, as if it were from שָׁקַר sakar, a different word. This arose, as I imagine, from their supposing that the word was the same with סָקַר sakar, Chaldee, "intueri, innuere oculis;" or that it had an affinity with the noun סִיקְרָא sikra, which the Chaldeans, or the rabbins at least, use for stibium, the mineral which was commonly used in colouring the eyes. See Jarchi's comment on the place. Though the colouring of the eyes with stibium be not particularly here expressed, yet I suppose it to be implied; and so the Chaldee paraphrase explains it; stibio linitis oculis, "with eyes dressed with stibium." This fashion seems to have prevailed very generally among the Eastern people in ancient times; and they retain the very same to this day.

Pietro delta Valle, giving a description of his wife, an Assyrian lady born in Mesopotamia, and educated at Baghdad, whom he married in that country, (Viaggi, Tom. I., Lettera 17), says, "Her eyelashes, which are long, and, according to the custom of the East, dressed with stibium, (as we often read in the Holy Scriptures of the Hebrew women of old, Jeremiah 4:30; Ezekiel 23:40; and in Xenophon, of Astyages the grandfather of Cyrus, and of the Medes of that time, Cyropaed. lib. i.), give a dark, and at the same time a majestic, shade to the eyes." "Great eyes," says Sandys, Travels, p. 67, speaking of the Turkish women, "they have in principal repute; and of those the blacker they be the more amiable; insomuch that they put between the eyelids and the eye a certain black powder with a fine long pencil, made of a mineral, brought from the kingdom of Fez, and called Alcohole; which by the not disagreeable staining of the lids doth better set forth the whiteness of the eye; and though it be troublesome for a time, yet it comforteth the sight, and repelleth ill humours." *Vis ejus (stibii) astringe ac refrigerare, principalis autem circa oculos; namque ideo etiam plerique Platyophthalmon id appellavere, quoniam in calliblepharis mulierum dilatat oculos; et fluxiones inhibet oculorum exulcerationesque.* "It is astringent in its virtue, and refrigerant, and to be chiefly employed about the eyes, and it is

called Platyophthalmon, for being put into those ointments with which women beautify their eyes, it dilates them, removes defluxions, and heals any ulcerations that may be about the eyelids." - Pliny, Nat. Hist. 33:6.

*Ille supercilium madida fuligine tactum*

*Obliqua producit acu, pingitque trementes*

*Attollens oculos*

*Juv. Sat. 2:93.*

One his eyebrows, tinged with black soot,

Lengthens with an oblique bodkin, and paints,

Lifting up his winking eyes.

"But none of those [Moorish] ladies," says Dr. Shaw, Travels, p. 294, fol., "take themselves to be completely dressed, till they have tinged the hair and edges of their eyelids with alkahol, the powder of lead ore. This operation is performed by dipping first into the powder a small wooden bodkin of the thickness of a quill; and then drawing it afterwards through the eyelids, over the ball of the eye." Ezekiel, Ezekiel 23:40, uses the same word in the form of a verb, כחלת עניך, *cachalt eynayik*, "thou didst dress thine eyes with alcahol;" which the Septuagint render εστιβιζουσ τους, οφθαλμους σου, "thou didst dress thine eyes with stibium;" just as they do when the word פוך *phuch* is employed: compare 2 Kings 9:30; Jeremiah 4:30. They supposed, therefore, that פוך *phuch* and כחל *cachal*, or in the Arabic form, alcahol, meant the same thing; and probably the mineral used of old for this purpose was the same that is used now; which Dr. Shaw (*ibid.* note) says is "a rich lead ore, pounded into an impalpable powder." Alcoholados; the word משקרות *meshakkeroth* in this place is thus rendered in an old Spanish translation. - Sanctius. See also Russell's Nat. Hist. of Aleppo, p. 102.

The following inventory, as one may call it, of the wardrobe of a Hebrew lady, must, from its antiquity, and the nature of the subject, have been very obscure even to the most ancient interpreters which we have of it; and from its obscurity must have been also peculiarly liable to the mistakes of transcribers. However, it is rather matter of curiosity than of importance; and is indeed, upon the whole, more intelligible and less corrupted than one might have reasonably expected. Clemens Alexandrinus, Paedag. lib. ii., c. 12, and Julius Pollux, lib. vii., c. 22, have each of them preserved from a comedy of Aristophanes, now lost, a similar



catalogue of the several parts of the dress and ornaments of a Grecian lady; which, though much more capable of illustration from other writers, though of later date, and quoted and transmitted down to us by two different authors, yet seems to be much less intelligible, and considerably more corrupted, than this passage of Isaiah. Salmasius has endeavored, by comparing the two quotations, and by much critical conjecture and learned disquisition, to restore the true reading, and to explain the particulars; with what success, I leave to the determination of the learned reader, whose curiosity shall lead him to compare the passage of the comedian with this of the prophet, and to examine the critic's learned labors upon it. Exercit. Plinian, p. 1148; or see Clem. Ales. as cited above, edit. Potter, where the passage, as corrected by Salmasius, is given.

Nich. Guel. Schroederus, professor of oriental languages in the University of Marpurg, has published a very learned and judicious treatise upon this passage of Isaiah. The title of it is, "*Commentarius Philologico-Criticus de Vestitu Mulierum Hebraearum ad Iesai 3 ver. 16-24. Lugd. Bat. 1745.*" As I think no one has handled this subject with so much judgment and ability as this author, I have for the most part followed him, in giving the explanation of the several terms denoting the different parts of dress, of which this passage consists; signifying the reasons of my dissent, where he does not give me full satisfaction.

Bishop Lowth's translation of these verses is the following: -

1. In that day will the Lord take from them the ornaments, Of the feet-rings, and the net-works, and the crescents;
- The pendants, and the bracelets, and the veils;
  - The tires, and the fetters, and the zones, And the perfume-boxes, and the amulets;
  - The rings, and the jewels of the nostrils;
  - The embroidered robes, and the tunics, And the cloaks, and the little purses,
  - The transparent garments, and the fine linen vests, And the turbans, and the mantles.
  - And there shall be instead of perfume, a putrid ulcer; And instead of well-girt raiment, rags; And instead of high-dressed hair, baldness; And instead of a zone, a girdle of sackcloth; And sun-burnt skin, instead of beauty.

**The daughters of Zion - walk -** What is meant by these several kinds of action and articles of dress cannot be well conjectured. How our ancestors understood them will appear from the following, which is the translation of these verses in my old MS. Bible: -

16. The doughteris of Syon wenteh with strught out necks, and ib bekes (winking) of eegen, geeden and flappeden with hondis for joye, and geeden: and with theire feet in curyous goying geeden; - 17. the Lord schall fully make ballid the top of the boughtris of Syon: and the Lord the her of hem schal naken. And for ournemente schal be schenschip.

18. In that day, the Lord schal don away the ournement of Schoon and hoosis: 19. and beegis, and brochis, and armeerclis, and mytris; 20. and coombis, and rybanys and reversis at the hemmys, and oynment boris and ereringis; 21. and ryngis and jemmys in the frount hongynge; 22. and chaunginge clothis, and litil pallis, and scheetis, and prynys; 23. and scheweris, and neche hercheuys, and flyetis, and roketis; 24. and ther schal be for swot smel, stynke, and for gyrdil, a litl coord; and for crisp her, ballidnesse; and for brest boond and heyr.

Some of these things are hard to be understood, though I think this version as good as that of the very learned bishop: but there is little doubt that articles of clothing and dress bore these names in the fourteenth century.

### Verse 17

**The Lord will smite "Will the Lord humble"** - ταπεινωσει, Septuagint; and so Syriac and Chaldee. For שפח sippach they read שפל shaphal . Instead of יהוה Yehovah, many MSS. have אדני Adonai .

**Will discover their secret parts "Expose their nakedness"** - It was the barbarous custom of the conquerors of those times to strip their captives naked, and to make them travel in that condition, exposed to the inclemency of the weather; and the worst of all, to the intolerable heat of the sun. But this to the women was the height of cruelty and indignity; and especially to such as those here described, who had indulged themselves in all manner of delicacies of living, and all the superfluities of ornamental dress; and even whose faces had hardly ever been exposed to the sight of man. This is always mentioned as the hardest part of the lot of captives. Nahum, Nahum 3:5, Nahum 3:6, denouncing the fate of Nineveh, paints it in very strong colors: -

"Behold, I am against thee, saith Jehovah, God of hosts:

And I will discover thy skirts upon thy face;

And I will expose thy nakedness to the nations;

And to the kingdoms thy shame.

And I will throw ordures upon thee;

And I will make thee vile, and set thee as a gazing-stock."

### Verse 18

**Ornaments about their feet "The ornaments of the feet rings"** - The late learned Dr. Hunt, professor of Hebrew and Arabic in the University of Oxford, has very well explained the word עֲנָס both verb and noun, in his very ingenious Dissertation on Prov, Isaiah 7:22, Isaiah 7:23. The verb means to skip, to bound, to dance along, and the noun, those ornaments of the feet which the Eastern ladies wore; chains or rings, which made a tinkling sound as they moved nimbly in walking. Eugene Roger, Description de la Terre Sainte, 54:2 ch. 2, speaking of the Arabian women, of the first rank in Palestine, says, "*Au lieu de brasselets elles ont de menottes d'argent, qu'elles portent aux poignets et aux pieds; ou sont attachez quantite de petits annelets d'argent, qui font un cliquetis comme d'une cymbale, lorsqu'elles cheminent ou se mouvent quelque peu.*" See Dr. Hunt's Dissertation; where he produces other testimonies to the same purpose from authors of travels. Hindoo women of ill fame wear loose ornaments one above another on their ankles, which at every motion make a tinkling noise. See Ward.

**And their cauls "the net-works"** - I am obliged to differ from the learned Schroederus almost at first setting out. He renders the word שְׁבִיסִים shebisim by soliculi, little ornaments, bullae, or studs, in shape representing the sun, and so answering to the following word שָׁהֲרִימִם saharonim, lunulae, crescents. He supposes the word to be the same with שְׁמִישִׁים shemishim, the י yod in the second syllable making the word diminutive, and the letter מ mem being changed for ב beth, a letter of the same organ. How just and well founded his authorities for the transmutation of these letters in the Arabic language are, I cannot pretend to judge; but as I know of no such instance in Hebrew, it seems to me a very forced etymology. Being dissatisfied with this account of the matter, I applied to my good friend above mentioned, the late Dr. Hunt, who very kindly returned the following answer to my inquiries: -

"I have consulted the Arabic Lexicons, as well MS. as printed, but cannot find שְׁבִיסִים shebisim in any of them, nor any thing belonging to it; so that no help is to be had from that language towards clearing up the meaning of this difficult word. But what the Arabic denies, the Syriac perhaps may afford; in which I find the verb שָׁבַשׁ shabas, to entangle or interweave, an etymology which is equally favorable to our marginal translation, net-works, with שָׁבַץ shabats, to make chequer work, or embroider, (the word by which Kimchi and others have

explained שביס shabis ); and has moreover this advantage over it, that the letters ש sin and ס samech are very frequently put for each other, but צ tsaddi and ס samech scarcely ever. Aben Ezra joins שביסים shebisim and עכסים achasim, which immediately precedes it, together; and says that שביס shabis was the ornament of the legs, as עכס echas was of the feet. His words are, עכס של רגלים, כמו שביס תכשיט של שוקים L."

## Verse 20

**The tablets** - The words בתי הנפש bottey hannephesh, which we translate tablets, and Bishop Lowth, perfume boxes, literally signify houses of the soul; and may refer to strong scented bottles used for pleasure and against fainting; similar to bottles with otto of roses, worn by the ladies of the East to the present time.

## Verse 21

**Nose-jewels "The jewels of the nostril"** - נזמי האף nizmey haaph . Schroederus explains this, as many others do, of jewels, or strings of pearl hanging from the forehead, and reaching to the upper part of the nose; than which nothing can be more ridiculous, as such are seldom seen on an Asiatic face. But it appears from many passages of Holy Scripture that the phrase is to be literally and properly understood of nose-jewels, rings set with jewels hanging from the nostrils, as ear-rings from the ears, by holes bored to receive them.

Ezekiel, enumerating the common ornaments of women of the first rank, has not omitted this particular, and is to be understood in the same manner, Ezekiel 16:11, Ezekiel 16:12. See also Genesis 24:47; -

"And I decked thee with ornaments;

And I put bracelets upon thine hands,

And a chain on thy neck:

And I put a jewel on thy nose,

And ear-rings on thine ears,

And a splendid crown upon thine head."

And in an elegant proverb of Solomon, Proverbs 11:22, there is a manifest allusion to this kind of ornament, which shows it to have been used in his time: -

"As a jewel of gold in the snout of a swine;

So is a woman beautiful, but wanting discretion."

This fashion, however strange it may appear to us, was formerly and is still common in many parts of the East, among women of all ranks. Paul Lucas, speaking of a village or clan of wandering people, a little on this side of the Euphrates, says, (2d Voyage du Levant, tom. i., art. 24), "The women, almost all of them, travel on foot; I saw none handsome among them. They have almost all of them the nose bored; and wear in it a great ring, which makes them still more deformed." But in regard to this custom, better authority cannot be produced than that of Pietro della Valle, in the account which he gives of the lady before mentioned, Signora Maani Gioerida, his own wife. The description of her dress, as to the ornamental parts of it, with which he introduces the mention of this particular, will give us some notion of the taste of the Eastern ladies for finery. "The ornaments of gold and of jewels for the head, for the neck, for the arms, for the legs, and for the feet (for they wear rings even on their toes) are indeed, unlike those of the Turks, carried to great excess, but not of great value: for in Bagdad jewels of high price are either not to be had, or are not used; and they wear such only as are of little value, as turquoises, small rubies, emeralds, carbuncles, garnets, pearls, and the like. My spouse dresses herself with all of them according to their fashion; with exception, however, of certain ugly rings of very large size, set with jewels, which, in truth, very absurdly, it is the custom to wear fastened to one of their nostrils, like buffaloes: an ancient custom, however, in the East, which, as we find in the Holy Scriptures, prevailed among the Hebrew ladies even in the time of Solomon, Proverbs 11:22. These nose-rings, in complaisance to me, she has left off, but I have not yet been able to prevail with her cousin and her sisters to do the same; so fond are they of an old custom, be it ever so absurd, who have been long habituated to it." Viaggi, Tom. i., Let. 17.

It is the left nostril that is bored and ornamented with rings and jewels. More than one hundred drawings from life of Eastern ladies lie now before me, and scarcely one is without the nose-jewel: both the arms and wrists are covered with bracelets, arm-circles, etc., as also their legs and feet; the soles of their feet and palms of their hands coloured beautifully red with henna, and their hair plaited and ornamented superbly. These beautiful drawings are a fine comment on this chapter.

## Verse 23

**The glasses** - The conjunction ἡ vau, and - And the glasses, is added here by forty-three of Kennicott's and thirty-four of De Rossi's MSS., and one of my own, ancient, as well as by many editions.

**And the veils. "The transparent garments"** - Τα διαφανη Λακωνικα, Sept. A kind of silken dress, transparent, like gauze; worn only by the most elegant women, and such as dressed themselves *elegantius quam necesse esset probis*, "more elegantly than modest women should." Such garments are worn to the present day; garments that not only show the shape of every part of the body, but the very color of the skin. This is evidently the case in some scores of drawings of Asiatic females now before me. This sort of garments was afterwards in use among the Greeks. Prodicus, in his celebrated fable (Xenoph. Memorab. Socr. lib. ii.) exhibits the personage of Sloth in this dress: Εσθητα δε, εξ ἧς ανμαλιστα ωρα διαλαμποι : -

"Her robe betray'd

Through the clear texture every tender limb,

Height'ning the charms it only seem'd to shade;

And as it flow'd adown so loose and thin,

Her stature show'd more tall, more snowy white her skin."

They were called *multitia* and *coa* (*scil, vestimenta*) by the Romans, from their being invented, or rather introduced into Greece, by one Pamphila of the island of Cos. This, like other Grecian fashions, was received at Rome, when luxury began to prevail under the emperors. It was sometimes worn even by the men, but looked upon as a mark of extreme effeminacy. See Juvenal, Sat. ii., 65, etc. Publius Syrus, who lived when the fashion was first introduced, has given a humorous satirical description of it in two lines, which by chance have been preserved: -

"*Aequum est, induere nuptam ventum textilem?*

*Palam prostare nudam in nebula linea?"*

## Verse 24

**Instead of sweet smell "perfume"** - A principal part of the delicacy of the Asiatic ladies consists in the use of baths, and of the richest oils and perfumes; an attention to which is in some degree necessary in those hot countries. Frequent mention is made of the rich ointments of the spouse in the Song of Solomon, Song of Solomon 4:10, Song of Solomon 4:11; : -

"How beautiful are thy breasts, my sister, my spouse!

How much more excellent than wine;

And the odour of thine ointments than all perfumes!

Thy lips drop as the honey-comb, my spouse!

Honey and milk are under thy tongue:

And the odor of thy garments is as the odour of Lebanon."

The preparation for Esther's being introduced to King Ahasuerus was a course of bathing and perfuming for a whole year; "six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours;" Esther 2:12; (note). A diseased and loathsome habit of body, instead of a beautiful skin, softened and made agreeable with all that art could devise, and all that nature, so prodigal in those countries of the richest perfumes, could supply, must have been a punishment the most severe and the most mortifying to the delicacy of these haughty daughters of Sion.

**Burning instead of beauty "A sunburnt skin"** - Gaspar Sanctius thinks the words **כי תחת** *ki thachath* an interpolation, because the Vulgate has omitted them. The clause **כי תחת יפי** *ki thachath yophi* seems to me rather to be imperfect at the end. Not to mention that **כי** *ki*, taken as a noun for *adustio*, burning, is without example, and very improbable. The passage ends abruptly, and seems to want a fuller conclusion.

In agreement with which opinion, of the defect of the Hebrew text in this place, the Septuagint, according to MSS. Pachom. and 1 D. ii., and Marchal., which are of the best authority, express it with the same evident marks of imperfection at the end of the sentence; thus: **ταυτα σοι αντι καλλωπισμου** The two latter add **δου** . This chasm in the text, from the loss probably of three or four words, seems therefore to be of long standing.

Taking כי ki in its usual sense, as a particle, and supplying לך lech from the סוף of the Septuagint, it might possibly have been originally somewhat in this form:

marah כי תחת יפי תהיה לך רעת מראה

raath

lech

thihyeh

yophi

thachath

ki

"Yea, instead of beauty thou shalt have an illfavoured countenance."

כי תחת יפי ki thachath yophi (q. תיה yachath), "for beauty shall be destroyed." Syr. chathath or נחת nachath. -Dr. Durell.

"May it not be כהי cohey, 'wrinkles instead of beauty?' as from יפה yaphah is formed יפי yephi, yophi; from מרה marah, מרי meri, etc.; so from כהה cahah, to be wrinkled, כהי cohey." - Dr. Jubb. The כי ki is wanting in one MS., and has been omitted by several of the ancients.

## Verse 25

**Thy mighty men** - For גבורתך geburathech an ancient MS. has גיבורך gibborech. The true reading, from the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, and Chaldee, seems to be גיבוריך gibborayich.

## Verse 26

**Sit upon the ground** - Sitting on the ground was a posture that denoted mourning and deep distress. The prophet Jeremiah ( Lamentations 2:8;) has given it the first place among many indications of sorrow, in the following elegant description of the same state of distress of his country: -



"The elders of the daughter of Sion sit on the ground, they are silent: They have cast up dust on their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth; The virgins of Jerusalem have bowed down their heads to the ground."

"We find Judea," says Mr. Addison, (on Medals, Dial. ii), "on several coins of Vespasian and Titus, in a posture that denotes sorrow and captivity. I need not mention her sitting on the ground, because we have already spoken of the aptness of such a posture to represent an extreme affliction. I fancy the Romans might have an eye on the customs of the Jewish nation, as well as those of their country, in the several marks of sorrow they have set on this figure. The psalmist describes the Jews lamenting their captivity in the same pensive posture: 'By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered thee, O Zion.' But what is more remarkable, we find Judea represented as a woman in sorrow sitting on the ground, in a passage of the prophet, that foretells the very captivity recorded on this medal." Mr. Addison, I presume, refers to this place of Isaiah; and therefore must have understood it as foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation by the Romans: whereas it seems plainly to relate, in its first and more immediate view at least, to the destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar, and the dissolution of the Jewish state under the captivity at Babylon.

Several of the coins mentioned here by Mr. Addison are in my own collection: and to such I have already referred in this work. I shall describe one here. On the obverse a fine head of the emperor Vespasian with this legend, *Imperator Julius Caesar Vespasianus Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribunitia Potestate Pater Patriae, Consul VIII.*

On the reverse a tall palm tree, emblem of the land of Palestine, the emperor standing on the left, close to the tree, with a trophy behind him; on the right, Judea under the figure of a female captive sitting on the ground, with her head resting on her hand, the elbow on her knee, weeping. Around is this legend, *Judea Capta. Senates Consulto.* However this prediction may refer proximately to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, I am fully of opinion that it ultimately refers to the final ruin of the Jewish state by the Romans. And so it has been understood by the general run of the best and most learned interpreters and critics.

## Great Prophetic Themes of Isaiah Still Unfulfilled

### The Day of the Lord

### Jerusalem as capital of the earth

Some 45 times Isaiah uses the term 'in that day' to describe this period of apocalyptic judgment 2: 10-22; 4:01; 13: 09-13; 24: 01-23; 32: 01-20; 63: 01-06

1: 26; 2: 03; 4: 02-06; 12: 06; 24: 23; 26: 01; 40: 02; 52: 01-12; 60: 01-22; 62: 01-07

### Blessing upon restored Israel

### Blessing upon the remnant

2: 01-05; 4: 02-06; 9: 07; 11: 04-16; 12: 01-06; 14: 01-03; 25: 01-12; 32: 15-20; 35: 01-10; 52: 01-12; 59: 20-21; 60: 01-12; 61: 03-62; 65: 17-66: 24

12: 01-06; 25: 01-12; 26: 01-19; 33: 24; 35: 10; 43: 25; 44: 22; 46: 13; 54: 06-10; 61: 06; 62: 12; 66: 08

### Restoration of Israel to Palestine

### Blessing upon the nations

11: 10-12; 14: 01-02; 27: 12-13; 35: 10; 43: 05-06; 49: 10-12; 66: 20

2: 01-04; 11: 03-04, 09-10; 25: 06-09; 60: 01-12

### Restoration of Palestine itself

### Blessing to entire creation

30: 23-26; 35: 01-10; 49: 19; 60: 13; 61: 04; 62: 04-05; 65: 21-25

Isaiah had a fleeting glimpse beyond the Kingdom Age to the new heaven and earth of the eternal state (65: 17; 66: 22). But like John in Revelation (Rev 21-22) he saw a blended view of millennial and eternal conditions (compare 11: 06-08 with 65: 25; 66: 22)

## Chapter 4

### 4.The glory awaiting the redeemed remnant(second discourse)

#### Introduction

The havoc occasioned by war, and those other calamities which the prophet had been describing in the preceding chapter, are represented as so terribly great that seven women should be left to one man, Isaiah 4:1. Great blessedness of the remnant that shall be accounted worthy to escape these judgments, Isaiah 4:2-4. The privileges of the Gospel set forth by allusions to the glory and pomp of the Mosaic dispensation, Isaiah 4:5, Isaiah 4:6.

## **Verse 1. The remnant survives the judgment of the Day of the Lord**

### **Verse 1**

**And seven women** - The division of the chapters has interrupted the prophet's discourse, and broken it off almost in the midst of the sentence. "The numbers slain in battle shall be so great, that seven women shall be left to one man." The prophet has described the greatness of this distress by images and adjuncts the most expressive and forcible. The young women, contrary to their natural modesty, shall become suitors to the men: they will take hold of them, and use the most pressing importunity to be married. In spite of the natural suggestions of jealousy, they will be content with a share only of the rights of marriage in common with several others; and that on hard conditions, renouncing the legal demands of the wife on the husband, (see Exodus 21:10;), and begging only the name and credit of wedlock, and to be freed from the reproach of celibacy. See Isaiah 54:4, Isaiah 54:5. Like Marcia, on a different occasion, and in other circumstances: -

*Da tantum nomen inane*

*Connubii: liceat tumulo scripsisse, Catonis Marcia.*

*Lucan, 2:342.*

"This happened," says Kimchi, "in the days of Ahaz, when Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judea one hundred and twenty thousand men in one day; see 2 Chronicles 18:6. The widows which were left were so numerous that the prophet said, "They are multiplied beyond the sand of the sea,"" Jeremiah 15:8.

**In that day** - These words are omitted in the Septuagint, and MSS.

## **Verse 2. The remnant accepts Messiah the branch of the Lord**

### **Verse 2**

**The branch of the Lord "the branch of Jehovah"** - The Messiah of Jehovah, says the Chaldee. And Kimchi says, The Messiah, the Son of David. The branch is an appropriate title of the Messiah; and the fruit of the land means the great Person to spring from the house of Judah, and is only a parallel expression signifying the same; or perhaps the blessings consequent upon the redemption procured by him. Compare Isaiah 45:8; (note), where the same great event is set forth under similar images, and see the note there.

**Them that are escaped of Israel "the escaped of the house of Israel" - A MS.**  
has **בית ישראל** beith yisrael, the house of Israel.

### **Verses 3-4. The remnant is cleansed and converted**

#### **Verse 3**

**Written among the living** - That is, whose name stands in the enrolment or register of the people; or every man living, who is a citizen of Jerusalem. See Ezekiel 13:9, where, "they shall not be written in the writing of the house of Israel," is the same with what immediately goes before, "they shall not be in the assembly of my people." Compare Psalm 69:28; Psalm 87:6; Exodus 32:32. To number and register the people was agreeable to the law of Moses, and probably was always practiced; being, in sound policy, useful, and even necessary. David's design of numbering the people was of another kind; it was to enroll them for his army. Michaelis Mosaisches Recht, Part iii., p. 227. See also his Dissert. de Censibus Hebraeorum.

#### **Verse 4**

**The spirit of burning** - Means the fire of God's wrath, by which he will prove and purify his people; gathering them into his furnace, in order to separate the dross from the silver, the bad from the good. The severity of God's judgments, the fiery trial of his servants, Ezekiel (Ezekiel 22:18-22;) has set forth at large, after his manner, with great boldness of imagery and force of expression. God threatens to gather them into the midst of Jerusalem, as into the furnace; to blow the fire upon them, and to melt them. Malachi, Malachi 3:2, Malachi 3:3, treats the same subject, and represents the same event, under the like images: -

"But who may abide the day of his coming?

And who shall stand when he appeareth?

For he is like the fire of the refiner,

And like the soap of the fullers.

And he shall sit refining and purifying the silver;

And he shall purify the sons of Levi;

And cleanse them like gold, and like silver;

That they may be Jehovah's ministers,

Presenting unto him an offering in righteousness."

This is an allusion to a chemist purifying metals. He first judges of the state of the ore or adulterated metal. Secondly, he kindles the proper degree of fire, and applies the requisite test; and thus separates the precious from the vile.

## **Verses 5-6. The remnant is sheltered and protected**

### **Verse 5**

**And the Lord will create** - One MS., the Septuagint, and the Arabic, have יביא yabi, He shall bring: the cloud already exists; the Lord will bring it over. This is a blessed promise of the presence of God in all the assemblies of his people.

**Every dwelling place "the station"** - The Hebrew text has, every station: but four MSS. (one ancient) omit כל col, all; very rightly, as it should seem: for the station was Mount Zion itself, and no other. See Exodus 15:17. And the Septuagint, Arabic, and MSS., add the same word כל col, before מקראה mikraeha, probably right: the word has only changed its place by mistake. מקראיה mikrayeh, "the place where they were gathered together in their holy assemblies," says Sal ben Melech. But twenty-five of Kennicott's MSS., and twenty-two of De Rossi's fifty-three editions, besides the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic, have the word in the plural number.

**A cloud and smoke by day** - This is a manifest allusion to the pillar of a cloud and of fire which attended the Israelites in their passage out of Egypt, and to the glory that rested on the tabernacle, Exodus 13:21; Exodus 40:38. The prophet Zechariah, Zechariah 2:5, applies the same image to the same purpose: -

"And I will be unto her a wall of fire round about;

And a glory will I be in the midst of her."

That is, the visible presence of God shall protect her. Which explains the conclusion of this verse of Isaiah; where the makkaph between כל col, and כבוד cabod, connecting the two words in construction, which ought not to be connected, has thrown an obscurity upon the sentence, and misled most of the translators.

**For upon all the glory shall be a defense** - Whatever God creates, he must uphold, or it will fail, Every degree of grace brings with it a degree of power to maintain itself in the soul.

## **Verse 6**

**A tabernacle** - In countries subject to violent tempests, as well as to intolerable heat, a portable tent is a necessary part of a traveller's baggage, for defense and shelter. And to such tents the words of the text make evident allusion. They are to be met with in every part of Arabia and Egypt, and in various other places in the East.

## **Chapter 5**

### **5. God's people shown their sin and its result (third discourse)**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter begins with representing, in a beautiful parable, the tender care of God for his people, and their unworthy returns for his goodness, Isaiah 5:1-7. The parable or allegory is then dropped; and the prophet, in plain terms, reproves and threatens them for their wickedness; particularly for their covetousness, Isaiah 5:8-10; intemperance, Isaiah 5:11; and inattention to the warnings of Providence, Isaiah 5:12. Then follows an enumeration of judgments as the necessary consequence. Captivity and famine appear with all their horrors, Isaiah 5:13. Hades, or the grave, like a ravenous monster, opens wide its jaws, and swallows down its myriads, Isaiah 5:14. Distress lays hold on all ranks, Isaiah 5:15; and God is glorified in the execution of his judgments, Isaiah 5:16; till the whole place is left desolate, a place for the flocks to range in, Isaiah 5:17. The prophet then pauses; and again resumes his subject, reproving them for several other sins, and threatening them with woes and vengeance, Isaiah 5:18-24; after which he sums up the whole of his awful denunciation in a very lofty and spirited epiphonema or conclusion. The God of armies, having hitherto corrected to no purpose, is represented with inimitable majesty, as only giving a hiss, and a swarm of nations hasten to his standard, Isaiah 5:25-27. Upon a guilty race, unpitied by heaven or by earth, they execute their commission; and leave the land desolate and dark, without one ray of comfort to cheer the horrid gloom, Isaiah 5:28-30.

This chapter likewise stands single and alone, unconnected with the preceding or following. The subject of it is nearly the same with that of the first chapter. It is a general reproof of the Jews for their wickedness; but it exceeds that chapter in



force, in severity, in variety, and elegance; and it adds a more express declaration of vengeance by the Babylonian invasion.

## Verses 1-7. By a parable

### Verse 1

**Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved "Let me sing now a song," etc.** - A MS., respectable for its antiquity, adds the word שיר shir, a song, after נָא na ; which gives so elegant a turn to the sentence by the repetition of it in the next member, and by distinguishing the members so exactly in the style and manner in the Hebrew poetical composition, that I am much inclined to think it genuine.

**A song of my beloved "A song of loves"** - דודי dodey, for דודים dodim : *status constructus pro absoluto*, as the grammarians say, as Micah 6:16; Lamentations 3:14, Lamentations 3:66, so Archbishop Secker. Or rather, in all these and the like cases, a mistake of the transcribers, by not observing a small stroke, which in many MSS., is made to supply the מ mem, of the plural, thus, דודי dodi . דודים dodey shirath dodim is the same with שיר ידידת shir yedidoth, Psalm 45:1. In this way of understanding it we avoid the great impropriety of making the author of the song, and the person to whom it is addressed, to be the same.

**In a very fruitful hill "On a high and fruitful hill"** - Hebrew בקרן בן שמן bekeren ben shamen, "on a horn the son of oil." The expression is highly descriptive and poetical. "He calls the land of Israel a horn, because it is higher than all lands; as the horn is higher than the whole body; and the son of oil, because it is said to be a land flowing with milk and honey." - Kimchi on the place. The parts of animals are, by an easy metaphor, applied to parts of the earth, both in common and poetical language. A promontory is called a cape or head; the Turks call it a nose. "*Dorsum immane mari summo*;" Virgil, a back, or ridge of rocks: -

*"Hanc latus angustum jam se cogentis in arctum*

*Hesperiae tenuem producit in aequora linguam,*

*Adriacas flexis claudit quae cornibus undas."*

Lucan, 2:612, of Brundisium, i.e., Βρεντεσιον, which, in the ancient language of that country, signifies stag's head, says Strabo. A horn is a proper and obvious image for a mountain or mountainous country. Solinus, cap. viii., says, "*Italiam, ubi longius processerit, in cornua duo scindi*;" that is, the high ridge of the Alps,

which runs through the whole length of it, divides at last into two ridges, one going through Calabria, the other through the country of the Brutii. "Cornwall is called by the inhabitants in the British tongue *Kernaw*, as lessening by degrees like a horn, running out into promontories like so many horns. For the Britons call a horn corn, in the plural kern." - Camden. "And Sammes is of opinion, that the country had this name originally from the Phoenicians, who traded hither for tin; keren, in their language, being a horn." - Gibson.

Here the precise idea seems to be that of a high mountain standing by itself; "*vertex montis, aut pars montis ad aliis divisa*;" which signification, says I. H. Michaelis, Bibl. Hallens., Not. in loc., the word has in Arabic.

Judea was in general a mountainous country, whence Moses sometimes calls it The Mountain, "Thou shalt plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance;" Exodus 15:17. "I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land beyond Jordan; that goodly mountain, and Lebanon;" Deuteronomy 3:25. And in a political and religious view it was detached and separated from all the nations round it. Whoever has considered the descriptions given of Mount Tabor, (see Reland, Palaestin.; Eugene Roger, Terre Sainte, p. 64), and the views of it which are to be seen in books of travels, (Maundrell, p. 114; Egmont and Heyman, vol. ii., p. 25; Thevenot, vol. i., p. 429), its regular conic form rising singly in a plain to a great height, from a base small in proportion, and its beauty and fertility to the very top, will have a good idea of "a horn the son of oil;" and will perhaps be induced to think that the prophet took his image from that mountain.

## Verse 2

**And gathered out the stones "And he cleared it from the stones"** - This was agreeable to the husbandry: "*Saxa, summa parte terrae, et vites et arbores laeduct; ima parte refrigerant*;" Columell. de arb. 3: "*Saxosum facile est expedire lectione lapidum*;" Id. 2:2. "*Lapides, qui supersunt, [al. insuper sunt], hieme rigent, aestate fervescent; idcirco satis, arbustis, et vitibus nocent*;" Pallad. 1:6. A piece of ground thus cleared of the stones Persius, in his hard way of metaphor, calls "*exossatus ager*," an unboned field; Sat. 6:52.

**The choicest vine "Sorek"** - Many of the ancient interpreters, the Septuagint, Aquila, and Theod., have retained this word as a proper name; I think very rightly. Sorek was a valley lying between Ascalon and Gaza, and running far up eastward in the tribe of Judah. Both Ascalon and Gaza were anciently famous for wine; the former is mentioned as such by Alexander Trallianus; the latter by several authors, quoted by Reland, Palaest., p. 589 and 986. And it seems that the upper part of the valley of Sorek, and that of Eshcol, where the spies



gathered the single cluster of grapes, which they were obliged to bear between two upon a staff, being both near to Hebron were in the same neighborhood, and that all this part of the country abounded with rich vineyards. Compare Numbers 13:22, Numbers 13:23; Judges 16:3, Judges 16:4. P. Nau supposes Eshcol and Sorek to be only different names for the same valley. Voyage Nouveau de la Terre Sainte, lib. iv., chap. 18. See likewise De Lisle's posthumous map of the Holy Land. Paris, 1763. See Bochart, Hieroz. ii., Colossians 725. Thevenot, i, p. 406. Michaelis (note on Judges 16:4; (note), German translation) thinks it probable, from some circumstances of the history there given, that Sorek was in the tribe of Judah, not in the country of the Philistines.

The vine of Sorek was known to the Israelites, being mentioned by Moses, Genesis 49:11, before their coming out of Egypt. Egypt was not a wine country. "Throughout this country there are no wines," Sandys, p. 101. At least in very ancient times they had none. Herodotus, 2:77, says it had no vines and therefore used an artificial wine made of barley. That is not strictly true, for the vines of Egypt are spoken of in Scripture, Psalm 78:47; Psalm 105:33; and see Genesis 40:11, by which it should seem that they drank only the fresh juice pressed from the grape, which was called οἶνος ἀμπελίνος ; Herodot., 2:37. But they had no large vineyards, nor was the country proper for them, being little more than one large plain, annually overflowed by the Nile. The Mareotic in later times is, I think, the only celebrated Egyptian wine which we meet with in history. The vine was formerly, as Hasselquist tells us it is now, "cultivated in Egypt for the sake of eating the grapes, not for wine, which is brought from Candia," etc. "They were supplied with wine from Greece, and likewise from Phoenicia," Herodot., 3:6. The vine and the wine of Sorek therefore, which lay near at hand for importation into Egypt, must in all probability have been well known to the Israelites, when they sojourned there. There is something remarkable in the manner in which Moses, Genesis 49:11, makes mention of it, which, for want of considering this matter, has not been attended to; it is in Jacob's prophecy of the future prosperity of the tribe of Judah: -

"Binding his foal to the vine,

And his ass's colt to his own sorek;

He washeth his raiment in wine,

And his cloak in the blood of grapes."

I take the liberty of rendering שְׂרָקָה sorekah, for שְׂרָקוֹ soreko, his sorek, as the Masoretes do by pointing עִירָה iroh, for עִירוֹ iro, his foal. עִיר ir, might naturally

enough appear in the feminine form; but it is not at all probable that שֹׂרֵק *sorek* ever should. By naming particularly the vine of Sorek, and as the vine belonging to Judah, the prophecy intimates the very part of the country which was to fall to the lot of that tribe. Sir John Chardin says, "that at Casbin, a city of Persia, they turn their cattle into the vineyards after the vintage, to browse on the vines." He speaks also of vines in that country so large that he could hardly compass the trunks of them with his arms. *Voyages*, tom. iii., p. 12, 12mo. This shows that the ass might be securely bound to the vine, and without danger of damaging the tree by browsing on it.

**And built a tower in the midst of it** - Our Savior, who has taken the general idea of one of his parables, Matthew 21:33; Mark 12:1, from this of Isaiah, has likewise inserted this circumstance of building a tower; which is generally explained by commentators as designed for the keeper of the vineyard to watch and defend the fruits. But for this purpose it was usual to make a little temporary hut, ( Isaiah 1:8;), which might serve for the short season while the fruit was ripening, and which was removed afterwards. The tower therefore should rather mean a building of a more permanent nature and use; the farm, as we may call it, of the vineyard, containing all the offices and implements, and the whole apparatus necessary for the culture of the vineyard, and the making of the wine. To which image in the allegory, the situation the manner of building, the use, and the whole service of the temple, exactly answered. And so the Chaldee paraphrast very rightly expounds it: *Et statui eos (Israelitas) ut plantam vineae selectae et aedificavi Sanctuarium meum in medio illorum*. "And I have appointed the Israelites as a plant of a chosen vine, and I have built my sanctuary in the midst of them." So also Hieron. in loc. *Aedificavit quoque turrim in medio ejus; templum videlicet in media civitate*. "He built also a tower in the midst of it, viz., his own temple in the midst of the city." That they have still such towers or buildings for use or pleasure, in their gardens in the East, see Harmer's *Observations*, 2 p. 241.

**And also made a wine-press therein. "And hewed out a lake therein"** - This image also our Savior has preserved in his parable. יֵקֶב *yekeb* ; the Septuagint render it here *προληνιον*, and in four other places *ὑποληνιον*, Isaiah 16:10; Joel 3:13; Haggai 2:17; Zechariah 14:10, I think more properly; and this latter word St. Mark uses. It means not the wine-press itself, or calcatorium, which is called גַּת *gath*, or פֹּרֶה *purah* ; but what the Romans called *lacus*, the lake; the large open place or vessel, which by a conduit or spout received the must from the wine-press. In very hot countries it was perhaps necessary, or at least very convenient, to have the lake under ground, or in a cave hewed out of the side of the rock, for coolness, that the heat might not cause too great a fermentation, and sour the must. *Vini confectio instituitur in cella, vel intimae domus camera*

*quadam a ventorum ingressu remota.* Kempfer, of Shiras wine. Amaen. Exot. p. 376. For the wind, to which that country is subject, would injure the wine. "The wine-presses in Persia," says Sir John Chardin, "are formed by making hollow places in the ground, lined with masons' work." Harmer's Observations, i., p. 392. See a print of one in Kempfer, p. 377.

Nonnus describes at large Bacchus hollowing the inside of a rock, and hewing out a place for the wine-press, or rather the lake: -

Και σκοπελους ελαχνηε· πεδοσκαφεος δε σιδηρου -144 Θηγαλεη γλωχινι μυχον  
κοιληνατο πετρης· Λειηνας δε μετωπα βαθυνομενων κενεωνων Αφρον [f. ακρον  
] ευστραφυλοιο τυπον ποιησατο λενου.

*Dionysiac. lib. xii., 50:331.*

"He pierced the rock; and with the sharpen'd tool

Of steel well-temper'd scoop'd its inmost depth:

Then smooth'd the front, and form'd the dark recess

In just dimensions for the foaming lake."

**And he looked "And he expected"** - Jeremiah, Jeremiah 2:21, uses the same image, and applies it to the same purpose, in an elegant paraphrase of this part of Isaiah's parable, in his flowing and plaintive manner: -

"But I planted thee a sorek, a scion perfectly genuine: How then art thou changed, and become to me the degenerate shoots of the strange vine!"

**Wild grapes "poisonous berries"** - באשׂים beushim, not merely useless, unprofitable grapes, such as wild grapes; but grapes offensive to the smell, noxious, poisonous. By the force and intent of the allegory, to good grapes ought to be opposed fruit of a dangerous and pernicious quality; as, in the explication of it, to judgment is opposed tyranny, and to righteousness, oppression. גפן gephen, the vine, is a common name or genus, including several species under it; and Moses, to distinguish the true vine, or that from which wine is made, from the rest. calls it, Numbers 6:4, גפן היין gephen haiyayin, the wine-vine. Some of the other sorts were of a poisonous quality, as appears from the story related among the miraculous acts of Elisha, 2 Kings 4:39-41. "And one went out into the field to gather potherbs; and he found a Seld vine, and he gathered from it wild fruit, his lapful; and he went and shred them into the pot of pottage, for they knew them not. And they poured it out for the men to eat: and it came to

pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out and said, There is death in the pot, O man of God; and they could not eat of it. And he said, Bring meal, (leg. קֶחֱזִי kechu, nine MSS., one edition), and he threw it into the pot. And he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was nothing hurtful in the pot."

From some such sorts of poisonous fruits of the grape kind Moses has taken these strong and highly poetical images, with which he has set forth the future corruption and extreme degeneracy of the Israelites, in an allegory which has a near relation, both in its subject and imagery, to this of Isaiah: Deuteronomy 32:32, Deuteronomy 32:33.

"Their vine is from the vine of Sodom,

And from the fields of Gomorrah:

Their grapes are grapes of gall;

Their clusters are bitter:

Their wine is the poison of dragons,

And the cruel venom of aspics."

"I am inclined to believe," says Hasselquist, "that the prophet here, Isaiah 5:2-4, means the hoary nightshade, *solanum incanum*; because it is common in Egypt, Palestine, and the East; and the Arabian name agrees well with it. The Arabs call it anab el dib, i.e., wolf grapes. The באושים beushim, says Rab. Chai., is a well known species of the vine, and the worst of all sorts. The prophet could not have found a plant more opposite to the vine than this; for it grows much in the vineyards, and is very pernicious to them; wherefore they root it out: it likewise resembles a vine by its shrubby stalk;" Travels, p. 289. See also Michaelis Questions aux Voyageurs Danois, No. 64.

### Verse 3

**Inhabitants** - יֹשְׁבֵי yoshebey, in the plural number; three MSS., (two ancient), and so likewise the Septuagint and Vulgate.

## Verse 6

**There shall come up briers and thorns "The thorn shall spring up in it" -** One MS. has בשמיר beshamir . The true reading seems to be בו שמור bo shamir, which is confirmed by the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

## Verse 7

**And he looked for judgment** - The paronomasia, or play on the words, in this place, is very remarkable; mishpat, mishpach, tsedakah, tseakah . There are many examples of it in the other prophets, but Isaiah seems peculiarly fond of it. See Isaiah 13:6, Isaiah 24:17, Isaiah 32:7, Isaiah 28:1, Isaiah 57:6, Isaiah 61:3, Isaiah 65:11, Isaiah 65:12. Rabbi David Kimchi has noticed the paronomasia here: he expected משפט mishpat, judgment, but behold משפה mishpach, oppression; he expected צדקה tsedakah, righteousness, but behold צעקה tseakah, a cry. The rabbins esteem it a great beauty; their term for it is צחות הלשון tsachoth haltashon, elegance of language.

**Oppression "tyranny"** - משפה mishpach, from שפה shaphach, *servum fecit*, Arab. Houbigant: שפחה shiphchah is *serva*, a handmaid or female slave. משפח mispach, eighteen MSS.

## Verses 8-23. By an enumeration of their sins

### Verse 8

**Wo unto them that - lay field to field "You who lay field unto field"** - Read חקריבו takribu, in the second person; to answer to the verb following. So Vulgate.

### Verse 9

**In mine ears. "To mine ear"** - The sentence in the Hebrew text seems to be imperfect in this place; as likewise in Isaiah 22:14; (note), where the very same sense seems to be required as here. See the note there; and compare 1 Samuel 9:15; (note). In this place the Septuagint supply the word ακουσθη, and the Syriac אשתמע eshtama, *auditus est Jehovah in auribus meis*, i.e., נגלה niglah, as in Isaiah 22:14.

**Many houses** - This has reference to what was said in the preceding verse: "In vain are ye so intent upon joining house to house, and field to field; your houses shall be left uninhabited, and your fields shall become desolate and barren; so that a vineyard of ten acres shall produce but one bath (not eight gallons) of

wine, and the husbandman shall reap but a tenth part of the seed which he has sown." Kimchi says this means such an extent of vineyard as would require ten yoke of oxen to plough in one day.

## **Verse 11**

**Woe unto them that rise up early** - There is a likeness between this and the following passage of the prophet Amos, Amos 6:3-6, who probably wrote before Isaiah. If the latter be the copier, he seems hardly to have equalled the elegance of the original: -

"Ye that put far away the evil day

And affect the seat of violence;

Who lie upon beds of ivory,

And stretch yourselves upon your couches;

And eat the lambs from the flock,

And calves from the midst of the stall;

Who chant to the sound of the viol,

And like David invent for yourselves instruments of music;

Who quaff wine in large bowls,

And are anointed with the choicest ointments:

But are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph."

Kimchi says, "they consider not the heavens nor their hosts: they pray not the morning nor the evening prayer unto the Lord."

**Follow strong drink** - Theodoret and Chrysostom on this place, both Syrians, and unexceptionable witnesses in what belongs to their own country, inform us that שכר *shechar* (σικερα in the Greek of both Testaments, rendered by us by the general term strong drink) meant properly palm wine, or date wine, which was and is still much in use in the Eastern countries. Judea was famous for the abundance and excellence of its palm trees; and consequently had plenty of this wine. "*Fiunt (vina) et e pomis; primumque e palmis, quo Parthi et Indi utuntur, et oriens totus: maturarum modio in aquae congiis tribus macerato*

*expressoque.*" Plin. lib. 14:19. "*Ab his cariotae [palmae] maxime celebrantur; et cibo quidem, sed et succo, uberrimae. Ex quibus praecipua vina orienti; iniqua capiti, unde porno nomen.*" Id. 13:9. Καρος signifies stupefaction: and in Hebrew likewise the wine has its name from its remarkably inebriating quality.

### Verse 13

**And their honorable men "And the nobles"** - These verses have likewise a reference to the two preceding. They that indulged in feasting and drinking shall perish with hunger and thirst; and Hades shall indulge his appetite as much as they had done, and devour them all. The image is strong and expressive in the highest degree. Habakkuk 2:5, uses the same image with great force: - the ambitious and avaricious conqueror.

"Enlargeth his appetite like Hades;

And he is like Death, and will never be satisfied,"

But, in Isaiah, Hades is introduced to much greater advantage, in person; and placed before our eyes in the form of a ravenous monster, opening wide his immeasurable jaws, and swallowing them all together: "Therefore Shoel hath dilated her soul, she hath opened her mouth beyond limit." Destruction expects more than a common meal, when God visits Jerusalem for her iniquities. This seems to refer to the ruin brought on the Jews by the Romans. Our blessed Lord repeats this parable, and applies it to this very transaction, Matthew 21:33.

### Verse 17

**The lambs "And the kids"** - גרים gerim, "strangers." The Septuagint read, more agreeably to the design of the prophet, כרים carim, αρνες, "the lambs." גדים gedayim, "the kids," Dr. Durell; nearer to the present reading: and so Archbishop Secker. The meaning is, their luxurious habitations shall be so entirely destroyed as to become a pasture for flocks.

**After their manner "Without restraint"** - כדברם kedobram, *secundum duetum eorum*; i.e. *suo ipsorum ductu*; as their own will shall lead them.

### Verse 18

**With a cart-rope "As a long cable"** - The Septuagint, Aquila, Sym., and Theod., for בחבלי bechabley, read כחבלי kechahley, ὡς καὶ ὡς, or ὡς καὶ ὡς; and the Septuagint, instead of שׂוּא shau, read some other word signifying long; ὡς καὶ ὡς καὶ ὡς; and so likewise the Syriac, אריכא arecha. Houbigant



conjectures that the word which the Septuagint had in their copies was שרוע sarua, which is used Leviticus 21:18, Leviticus 22:23, for something in an animal body superfluous, lengthened beyond its natural measure. And he explains it of sin added to sin, and one sin drawing on another, till the whole comes to an enormous length and magnitude; compared to the work of a rope-maker still increasing and lengthening his rope, with the continued addition of new materials. "*Eos propheta similes facit homini restiario, qui funem torquet, cannabe addita et contorta, eadem iterans, donec funem in longum duxerit, neque eum liceat protrahi longius.*" "An evil inclination," says Kimchi on this place, from the ancient rabbins, "is at the beginning like a fine hair-string, but at the finishing like a thick cart-rope." By a long progression in iniquity, and a continued accumulation of sin, men arrive at length to the highest degree of wickedness; bidding open defiance to God, and scoffing at his threatened judgments, as it is finely expressed in the next verse. The Chaldee paraphrast explains it in the same manner, of wickedness increasing from small beginnings, till it arrives to a great magnitude. - L.

I believe neither the rabbins nor Bishop Lowth have hit on the true meaning of this place, the prophet seems to refer to idol sacrifices. The victims they offered were splendidly decked out for the sacrifice. Their horns and hoofs were often gilded, and their heads dressed out with fillets and garlands. The cords of vanity may refer to the silken strings by which they were led to the altar, some of which were unusually thick. The offering for iniquity was adorned with fillets and garlands; the sin-offering with silken cords, like unto cart-ropes. Pride, in their acts of humiliation, had the upper hand.

## Verse 19

**Let the counsel of the Holy One** - Tryphiodorus has an expression something like this: -

- επει Διος ηλυθε βουλη.

*Tryph. Il Excid. 239.*

Because the counsel of Jupiter was come.

"This expression, ηλυθε βουλη, is, I believe, something uncommon; but it is exactly paralleled and explained by a passage in Isaiah, Isaiah 5:19. The Septuagint has expressed it in the very same words with Tryphiodorus: και ελθοι η βουλ η του αγιου Ισραηλ, ινα γνωμεν ." - Merrick's note, ad loc.



## Verse 22

**Mighty to drink wine** - "They show not," says Kimchi, "their strength in combating their enemies, but in drunkenness and debauchery."

## Verse 23

**The righteous** - צדיק tsaddik, singular, Sept. Vulg., and two editions.

## Verses 24-30. By a threat of captivity

### Verse 24

**The flame "The tongue of fire"** - "The flame, because it is in the shape of a tongue; and so it is called metaphorically." Sal. ben Melec. The metaphor is so exceedingly obvious, as well as beautiful, that one may wonder that it has not been more frequently used. Virgil very elegantly intimates, rather than expresses, the image; -

*Ecce levis summo de vertice visus Iuli*

*Fundere lumen apex; tactuque innoxia molli*

*Lambere flamma comas, et circum tempora pasci.*

Aen. 2:682.

"Strange to relate! from young Iulus' head

A lambent flame arose, which gently spread

Around his brows, and on his temples fed."

And more boldly of Aetna darting out flames from its top: -

*Interdumque atram prorumpit ad aethera nubem,*

*Turbine fumantem piceo, et candente favilla:*

*Attollitque globos flammaram, et sidera lambit.*

Aen. 3:574.

"By turns a pitchy cloud she rolls on high,

By turns hot embers from her entrails fly,  
And flakes of mountain flames, that lick the sky."

The disparted tongues, as it were of fire, Acts 2:3, which appeared at the descent of the Holy Spirit, on the apostles, give the same idea; that is, of flames shooting diversely into pyramidal forms, or points, like tongues. It may be farther observed that the prophet in this place has given the metaphor its full force, in applying it to the action of fire in eating up and devouring whatever comes in its way, like a ravenous animal whose tongue is principally employed in taking in his food or prey; which image Moses has strongly exhibited in an expressive comparison: "And Moab said to the elders of Midian Now shall this collection of people lick up all that are around about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field," Numbers 22:4. See also 1 Kings 18:38.

**Their root shall be as rottenness** - כמק cammak, like mak ; whence probably our word muck, dung, was derived.

## Verse 25

**The hills did tremble "And the mountains trembled"** - Probably referring to the great earthquakes in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, in or not long before the time of the prophet himself, recorded as a remarkable era in the title of the prophecies of Amos., Amos 1:1, and by Zechariah, Zechariah 14:5.

## Verse 26

**He will - hiss "He will hist"** - "The metaphor is taken from the practice of those that keep bees, who draw them out of their hives into the fields, and lead them back again, στυγισμασι, by a hiss or a whistle." - Cyril, on this place; and to the same purpose Theodoret, ib. In Isaiah 7:18, the metaphor is more apparent, by being carried farther, where the hostile armies are expressed by the fly and the bee: -

"Jehovah shall hist the fly That is in the utmost parts of Egypt; And the bee, that is in the land of Assyria."

On which place see Deuteronomy 1:44; Psalm 118:12; and God calls the locusts his great army, Joel 2:25; Exodus 23:28. See Huet, Quest. Alnet. 2:12. שרק sharak or shrak, he shall whistle for them, call loud and shrill; he shall shriek, and they (their enemies) shall come at his call.

**With speed** - This refers to the Isaiah 5:19. As the scoffers had challenged God to make speed, and to hasten his work of vengeance, so now God assures them that with speed and swiftly it shall come.

### **Verse 27**

**None - among them** - Kimchi has well illustrated this continued exaggeration or hyperbole, as he rightly calls it, to the following effect: "Through the greatness of their courage they shall not be fatigued with their march, nor shall they stumble though they march with the utmost speed: they shall not slumber by day, nor sleep by night; neither shall they ungird their armor, or put off their sandals to take their rest. Their arms shall be always in readiness, their arrows sharpened, and their bows bent. The hoofs of their horses are hard as a rock. They shall not fail, or need to be shod with iron: the wheels of their carriages shall move as rapidly as a whirlwind."

**Neither shall the girdle** - The Eastern people, wearing long and loose garments, were unfit for action or business of any kind, without girding their clothes about them. When their business was finished they took off their girdles. A girdle therefore denotes strength and activity; and to unloose the girdle is to deprive of strength, to render unfit for action. God promises to unloose the loins of kings before Cyrus, Isaiah 45:1. The girdle is so essential a part of a soldier's accoutrements, being the last that he puts on to make himself ready for action, that to be girded, ζωννυσθαι, with the Greeks means to be completely armed and ready for battle: -

Ατρείδης δ εβοησεν, ιδε ζωννυσθαι ανωγεν

Αργειους.

*Iliad, 11:15.*

Το δε ενδυναι τα όπλα εκαλουν οι παλαιοι ζωννυσθαι.

*Pausan. Boeot.*

It is used in the same manner by the Hebrews: "Let not him that girdeth himself boast as he that unlooseth his girdle," 1 Kings 20:11; that is, triumph not before the war is finished.

## Verse 28

**Their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint "The hoofs of their horses shall be counted as adamant"** - The shoeing of horses with iron plates nailed to the hoof is quite a modern practice, and was unknown to the ancients, as appears from the silence of the Greek and Roman writers, especially those that treat of horse medicine, who could not have passed over a matter so obvious and of such importance that now the whole science takes its name from it, being called by us farriery. The horseshoes of leather and iron which are mentioned; the silver and gold shoes with which Nero and Poppaea shod their mules, used occasionally to preserve the hoofs of delicate cattle, or for vanity, were of a very different kind; they enclosed the whole hoof as in a case, or as a shoe does a man's foot, and were bound or tied on. For this reason the strength, firmness and solidity of a horse's hoof was of much greater importance with them than with us, and was esteemed one of the first praises of a fine horse. Xenophon says that a good horse's hoof is hard, hollow, and sounds upon the ground like a cymbal. Hence the χαλκοποδες ιπποι, of Homer, and Virgil's solido graviter sonat ungula cornu . And Xenophon gives directions for hardening the horses' hoofs by making the pavement on which he stands in the stable with roundheaded stones. For want of this artificial defense to the foot which our horses have, Amos, Amos 6:12, speaks of it as a thing as much impracticable to make horses run upon a hard rock as to plough up the same rock with oxen: -

"Shall horses run upon a rock?

Shall one plough it up with oxen?"

These circumstances must be taken into consideration in order to give us a full notion of the propriety and force of the image by which the prophet sets forth the strength and excellence of the Babylonish cavalry, which made a great part of the strength of the Assyrian army. Xenop. Cyrop. lib. ii.

**Like a whirlwind** - כסופה cassuphah, like the stormy blast. Here sense and sound are well connected.

## Verse 30

**If one look unto the land, etc. "And these shall look to the heaven upward, and down to the earth"** - ונבט לארץ venibbat laarets . Και εμβλεψονται εις την γην . So the Septuagint, according to the Vatican and Alexandrian copies; but the Complutensian and Aldine editions have it more fully, thus: - Και εμβλεψονται εις τον ουρανον ανω, και κατω ; and the Arabic from the Septuagint, as if it had stood thus: Και εμβλεψονται εις ουρανον, και εις την γην

κατω, both of which are plainly defective; the words εις την γην, unto the earth, being wanted in the former, and the word ανω, above, in the latter. But an ancient Coptic version from the Septuagint, supposed to be of the second century, some fragments of which are preserved in the library of St. Germain des Prez at Paris, completes the sentence; for, according to this version, it stood thus in the Septuagint. - Και εμβλεψονται εις τον ουρανον ανω, και εις την γην κατω ; "And they shall look unto the heavens above and unto the earth beneath," and so it stands in the Septuagint MSS., Pachom. and 1. D. II., according to which they must have read their Hebrew text in this manner: - למעלה לארץ למטה . ונבט לשמים . This is probably the true reading, with which I have made the translation agree. Compare Isaiah 8:22; where the same sense is expressed in regard to both particulars, which are here equally and highly proper, the looking upwards, as well as down to the earth: but the form of expression is varied. I believe the Hebrew text in that place to be right, though not so full as I suppose it was originally here; and that of the Septuagint there to be redundant, being as full as the Coptic version and MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2 represent it in this place, from which I suppose it has been interpolated.

**Darkness "The gloomy vapor"** - The Syriac and Vulgate seem to have read בערפלה bearphalach ; but Jarchi explains the present reading as signifying darkness; and possibly the Syriac and Vulgate may have understood it in the same manner.

## Chapter 6

### 6.Isaiah's call and commission (fourth discourse)

#### Introduction

This chapter, by a particular designation of Isaiah to the prophetic office, Isaiah 6:1-8, introduces, with great solemnity, a declaration of the whole tenor of the Divine conduct in reference to his people, who, on account of their unbelief and impenitence, should for a very long period be given up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, Isaiah 6:9, Isaiah 6:10; and visited with such calamities as would issue on the total desolation of their country, and their general dispersion, Isaiah 6:11, Isaiah 6:12. The prophet adds, however, that under their repeated dispersions, (by the Chaldeans, Romans, etc.), a small remnant would be preserved as a seed from which will be raised a people, in whom will be fulfilled all the Divine promises, Isaiah 6:13.

As this vision seems to contain a solemn designation of Isaiah to the prophetic office, it is by most interpreters thought to be the first in order of his prophecies. But this perhaps may not be so; for Isaiah is said, in the general title of his

prophecies, to have prophesied in the time of Uzziah, whose acts, first and last, he wrote, 2 Chronicles 26:22; which is usually done by a contemporary prophet; and the phrase, in the year that Uzziah died, probably means after the death of Uzziah; as the same phrase ( Isaiah 14:28;) means after the death of Ahaz. Not that Isaiah's prophecies are placed in exact order of time. Chapters 2, 3, Isaiah 4:1-6, 5, seem by internal marks to be antecedent to chap. 1; they suit the time of Uzziah, or the former part of Jotham's reign; whereas chap. 1 can hardly be earlier than the last years of Jotham. See note on Isaiah 1:7, and Isaiah 2:1; (note). This might be a new designation, to introduce more solemnly a general dedication of the whole course of God's dispensations in regard to his people and the fates of the nation; which are even now still depending, and will not be fully accomplished till the final restoration of Israel.

In this vision the ideas are taken in general from royal majesty, as displayed by the monarchs of the East; for the prophet could not represent the ineffable presence of God by any other than sensible and earthly images. The particular scenery of it is taken from the temple. God is represented as seated on his throne above the ark, in the most holy place, where the glory appeared above the cherubim, surrounded by his attendant ministers. This is called by God himself "the place of his throne, and the place of the soles of his feet," Ezekiel 43:7. "A glorious throne exalted of old, is the place of our sanctuary," saith the prophet Jeremiah, chap, Jeremiah 17:12. The very posture of sitting is a mark of state and solemnity: *Sed et ipsum verbum sedere regni significat potestatem*, saith Jerome, Comment. in Ephesians 1:20. See note on Isaiah 3:1; (note). St. John, who has taken many sublime images from the prophets of the Old Testament, and in particular from Isaiah, hath exhibited the same scenery, drawn out into a greater number of particulars; Revelation 4:1-11.

The veil, separating the most holy place from the holy or outermost part of the temple, is here supposed to be taken away; for the prophet, to whom the whole is exhibited, is manifestly placed by the altar of burnt-offering, at the entrance of the temple, (compare Ezekiel 43:5, Ezekiel 43:6;), which was filled with the train of the robe, the spreading and overflowing of the Divine glory. The Lord upon the throne, according to St. John ( John 12:41;), was Christ; and the vision related to his future kingdom when the veil of separation was to be removed, and the whole earth was to be filled with the glory of God, revealed to all mankind: which is likewise implied in the hymn of the seraphim, the design of which is, saith Jerome on the place, *Ut mysterium Trinitatis in una Divinitate demonstrant; et nequaquam templum Judaicum, sicut prius, sed omnem terram illius gloria plenam esse testentur*; "That they may point out the mystery of the Trinity in one Godhead; and that the Jewish temple alone should not be, as formerly, the place of the Divine glory, for the whole earth should be filled with

it." It relates, indeed, primarily to the prophet's own time, and the obduration of the Jews of that age, and their punishment by the Babylonish captivity; but extends in its full attitude to the age of Messiah, and the blindness of the Jews to the Gospel, (see Matthew 13:14; John 12:40; Acts 28:26; Romans 11:8;), the desolation of their country by the Romans, and their being rejected by God. That nevertheless a holy seed - a remnant, should be preserved; and that the nation should spread out and flourish again from the old stock.

## Verses 1-4. The prophet sees God

### Verse 1

**The Lord** - Fifty-one MSS. of Kennicott's, and fifty-four of De Rossi's, and one edition; in the 8th verse, ( Isaiah 6:8;); forty-four MSS. of Kennicott's, and forty-six of De Rossi's, and one edition; and in the 11th verse ( Isaiah 6:11;); thirty-three MSS. of Kennicott's, and many of De Rossi's, and one edition, for אֲדֹנָי Adonai, "the Lord" read יְהוָה "Jehovah," which is probably the true reading; (compare Isaiah 6:6;); as in many other places, in which the superstition of the Jews has substituted אֲדֹנָי Adonai for יְהוָה Yehovah . One of my own MSS., a very ancient and large folio, to which the points and the masora have been added by a later hand, has יְהוָה Yehovah in the 1st and 8th verses, in the teeth of the masora, which orders it in both places to be read אֲדֹנָי Adonai .

### Verse 2

**Above it stood the seraphim** - שֵׁרָפִים seraphim, from שָׂרַף seraph, to burn. He saw says Kimchi, the angels as flames of fire, that the depravity of that generation might be exhibited, which was worthy of being totally burnt up.

**He covered his feet "He covereth his feet"** - By the feet the Hebrews mean all the lower parts of the body. But the people of the East generally wearing long robes, reaching to the ground, and covering the lower parts of the body down to the feet, it may hence have been thought want of respect and decency to appear in public and on solemn occasions with even the feet themselves uncovered. Kempfer, speaking of the king of Persia giving audience, says, *Rex in medio supremi atrii cruribus more patrio inflexis sedebat: corpus tunica investiebat flava, ad suras cum staret protensa; discumbentis vero pedes discalceatos pro urbanitate patria operiens.* - Amoen. Exot. p. 227. "The king sat on the floor cross-legged, as is the custom of the country. He was covered with a yellow garment, which reached down to the feet when standing, but covered the feet for decency when sitting with his slippers off." Sir John Chardin's MS. note on this place of Isaiah is as follows: *Grande marque de respect en orient de se cacher les pieds, quand on est assis, et de baisser le visage. Quand le souverain se*



*monstre en Chine et a Japon, chacun se jette le visage contre terre, et il n'est pas permis de regarder le roi; "It is a great mark of respect in the East to cover the feet, and to bow down the head in the presence of the king."*

### Verse 3

**Holy, holy, holy** - This hymn performed by the seraphim, divided into two choirs, the one singing responsively to the other, which Gregory Nazian., Carm. 18, very elegantly calls Συμφωνον, αντιφωνον, αγγελων στασιν, is formed upon the practice of alternate singing, which prevailed in the Jewish Church from the time of Moses, whose ode at the Red Sea was thus performed, (see Exodus 15:20, Exodus 15:21;), to that of Ezra, under whom the priests and Levites sung alternately,

"O praise Jehovah, for he is gracious;

For his mercy endureth for ever;"

Ezra 3:11. See De Sac. Poes. Hebr. Prael. xix., at the beginning.

### Verse 5. The prophet sees himself

#### Verse 5

**Wo is me! for I am undone** - נִדְמֵיתִי nidmeythi, I am become dumb. There is something exceedingly affecting in this complaint. I am a man of unclean lips; I cannot say, Holy, holy, holy! which the seraphs exclaim. They are holy; I am not so: they see God, and live; I have seen him, and must die, because I am unholy. Only the pure in heart shall see God; and they only can live in his presence for ever, Reader, lay this to heart; and instead of boasting of thy excellence, and trusting in thy might, or comforting thyself in thy comparative innocence, thou wilt also be dumb before him, because thou hast been a man of unclean lips, and because thou hast still an unclean heart.

**I am undone "I am struck dumb"** - נִדְמֵיתִי nidmeythi, twenty-eight MSS. (five ancient) and three editions. - I understand it as from דָּוִם dum or דָּמָם damam, *silere*, "to be silent;" and so it is rendered by the Syriac, Vulgate, Symmachus, and by some of the Jewish interpreters, *apud* Sal. b. Melec. The rendering of the Syriac is תָּוִיר אָנִי tavar ani, *stupens, attonitus sum*, "I am amazed." He immediately gives the reason why he was struck dumb: because he was a man of polluted lips, and dwelt among a people of polluted lips, and was unworthy, either to join the seraphim in singing praises to God, or to be the messenger of God to his people. Compare Exodus 4:10; Exodus 6:12; Jeremiah 1:6.



## **Verses 6-7. The prophet is cleansed**

## **Verses 8-10. The prophet is commissioned**

### **Verse 6**

**A live coal** - The word of prophecy, which was put into the mouth of the prophet.

**From off the altar** - That is, from the altar of burnt-offerings, before the door of the temple, on which the fire that came down at first from heaven ( Leviticus 9:24; 2 Chronicles 7:1;) was perpetually burning. It was never to be extinguished, Leviticus 6:12, Leviticus 6:13.

### **Verse 9**

**And he said** - לִי li, to me, two MSS. and the Syriac. Thirteen MSS. have רָאָה raah, in the regular form.

### **Verse 10**

**Make the heart of this people fat "Gross"** - The prophet speaks of the event, the fact as it would actually happen, not of God's purpose and act by his ministry. The prophets in other places said to perform the thing which they only foretell: -

"Lo! I have given thee a charge this day

Over the nations, and over the kingdoms;

To pluck up, and to pull down;

To destroy, and to demolish;

To build, and to plant."

*Jeremiah 1:10.*

And Ezekiel says, "When I came to destroy the city," that is, as it is rendered in the margin of our version, "when I came to prophesy that the city should be destroyed;" Ezekiel 43:3. To hear, and not understand; to see, and not perceive; is a common saying in many languages. Demosthenes uses it, and expressly calls it a proverb: ὥστε τοῦ της παροιμίας ὁρῶντας μὴ ὁρᾶν, καὶ ἀκουόντας μὴ ἀκούειν ; Contra Aristogit. I., sub fin. The prophet, by the bold figure in the

sentiment above mentioned, and the elegant form and construction of the sentence, has raised it from a common proverb into a beautiful mashal, and given it the sublime air of poetry.

Or the words may be understood thus, according to the Hebrew idiom: "Ye certainly hear, but do not understand; ye certainly see, but do not acknowledge." Seeing this is the case, make the heart of this people fat - declare it to be stupid and senseless; and remove from them the means of salvation, which they have so long abused.

There is a saying precisely like this in Aeschylus: -

- - - βλέποντες εβλεπον ματην,π

Κλυοντες ουκ ηκουον .

*Aesch. Prom. Vincit. 456.*

"Seeing, they saw in vain; and hearing, they did not understand."

**And shut "Close up"** - השע hasha . This word Sal. ben Melec explains to this sense, in which it is hardly used elsewhere, on the authority of Onkelos. He says it means closing up the eyes, so that one cannot see; that the root is שוע shava, by which word the Targum has rendered the word טח tach, Leviticus 14:42, בית וטח את vetach eth beith, "and shall plaster the house." And the word טח tach is used in the same sense, Isaiah 44:18. So that it signifies to close up the eyes by some matter spread upon the lids. Mr. Harmer very ingeniously applies to this passage a practice of sealing up the eyes as a ceremony, or as a kind of punishment used in the East, from which the image may possibly be taken. *Observ. 2:278.*

**With their heart "With their hearts"** - ובלבבו ubilebabo, fifteen MSS. of Kennicott's and fourteen of De Rossi's, and two editions, with the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

**And be healed "And I should heal"** - ואר פא veer pa, Septuagint, Vulgate. So likewise Matthew 13:14; John 12:40; Acts 28:27.

## Verses 11-13. The prophet is given the outcome of the commission

### Verse 11

**Be utterly desolate "Be left"** - For תשאה tishaeh, the Septuagint and Vulgate read תשאהר tishshaer .

### Verse 13

**A tenth** - This passage, though somewhat obscure, and variously explained by various interpreters, has, I think, been made so clear by the accomplishment of the prophecy, that there remains little room to doubt of the sense of it. When Nebuchadnezzar had carried away the greater and better part of the people into captivity, there was yet a tenth remaining in the land, the poorer sort left to be vinedressers and husbandmen, under Gedaliah, 2 Kings 25:12, 2 Kings 25:22, and the dispersed Jews gathered themselves together, and returned to him, Jeremiah 40:12; yet even these, fleeing into Egypt after the death of Gedaliah, contrary to the warning of God given by the prophet Jeremiah, miserably perished there. Again, in the subsequent and more remarkable completion of the prophecy in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dissolution of the commonwealth by the Romans, when the Jews, after the loss of above a million of men, had increased from the scanty residue that was left of them, and had become very numerous again in their country; Hadrian, provoked by their rebellious behavior, slew above half a million more of them, and a second time almost extirpated the nation. Yet after these signal and almost universal destructions of that nation, and after so many other repeated exterminations and massacres of them in different times and on various occasions since, we yet see, with astonishment, that the stock still remains, from which God, according to his promise frequently given by his prophets, will cause his people to shoot forth again, and to flourish.

A tenth, עשיריה asiriyah . The meaning, says Kimchi, of this word is, there shall yet be in the land ten kings from the time of declaring this prophecy. The names of the ten kings are Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Jostah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah; then there shall be a general consumption, the people shall be carried into captivity, and Jerusalem shall be destroyed.

For בם bam, in them, above seventy MSS., eleven of Kennicott's, and thirty-four of De Rossi's, read בה bah, in it; and so the Septuagint.

## **Volume II. Book of Immanuel 7:1-12:6**

### **Chapter 7**

#### **7.The great messianic sign concerning Immanuel (first discourse)**

##### **Introduction**

The king of Judah and the royal family being in the utmost consternation on receiving accounts of the invasion of the kings of Syria and Israel, the prophet is sent to assure them that God would make good his promises to David and his house; so that, although they might be corrected, they could not be destroyed, while these prophecies remained to be accomplished, Isaiah 7:1-9. The Lord gives Ahaz a sign that the confederacy against Judah shall be broken, which sign strikingly points out the miraculous conception of the Messiah, who was to spring from the tribe of Judah, Isaiah 7:10-16. Prediction of very heavy calamities which the Assyrians would inflict upon the land of Judea, Isaiah 7:17-25.

The confederacy of Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, against the kingdom of Judah, was formed in the time of Jotham; and perhaps the effects of it were felt in the latter part of his reign; see 2 Kings 15:37, and note on Isaiah 1:7-9; (note). However, in the very beginning of the reign of Ahaz, they jointly invaded Judah with a powerful army, and threatened to destroy or to dethrone the house of David. The king and royal family being in the utmost consternation on receiving advises of their designs, Isaiah is sent to them to support and comfort them in their present distress, by assuring them that God would make good his promises to David and his house. This makes the subject of this, and the following, and the beginning of the ninth chapters, in which there are many and great difficulties.

Chap. 7 begins with an historical account of the occasion of this prophecy; and then follows, Isaiah 7:4-16, a prediction of the ill success of the designs of the Israelites and Syrians against Judah; and from thence to the end of the chapter, a denunciation of the calamities to be brought upon the king and people of Judah by the Assyrians, whom they had now hired to assist them. Chap. 8 has a pretty close connection with the foregoing; it contains a confirmation of the prophecy before given of the approaching destruction of the kingdoms of Israel and Syria by the Assyrians, of the denunciation of the invasion of Judah by the same Assyrians. Isaiah 8:9, Isaiah 8:10, give a repeated general assurance, that all the designs of the enemies of God's people shall be in the end disappointed and brought to naught; Isaiah 8:11, etc., admonitions and threatenings, (I do not

attempt a more particular explanation of this very difficult part), concluding with an illustrious prophecy Isaiah 9:1-6, of the manifestation of Messiah, the transcendent dignity of his character, and the universality and eternal duration of his kingdom.

### **Verses 1-2. Historical circumstances calling forth the sign**

### **Verses 3-9. A message of encouragement**

#### **Verse 3**

**Now** - נָא na, is omitted by two MSS., the Septuagint, Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate.

#### **Verse 4**

The Syriac omits וְאַרָם vearam, "and Syria;" the Vulgate reads מֶלֶךְ אֲרָם melech aram, "king of Syria:" one or the other seems to be the true reading. I prefer the former: or, instead of וְאַרָם וּבֶן vearam uben, read וּפְקַח בֶּן vepekach ben, and pekah son, MS.

#### **Verse 5**

**Because - Remaliah** - All these words are omitted by one MS. and the Syriac; a part of them also by the Septuagint.

#### **Verse 8-9**

### **And verses 10-13. God's sign to confirm the prophet's message**

**For the head of Syria, etc.** - "Though the head of Syria be Damascus, And the head of Damascus Retsin; Yet within threescore and five years Ephraim shall be broken, that he be no more a people: And the head of Ephraim be Samaria; And the head of Samaria Remaliah's son.

"Here are six lines, or three distichs, the order of which seems to have been disturbed by a transposition, occasioned by three of the lines beginning with the same word וְרֹאשׁ verosh, "and the head," which three lines ought not to have been separated by any other line intervening; but a copyist, having written the first of them, and casting his eye on the third, might easily proceed to write after the first line beginning with וְרֹאשׁ verosh, that which ought to have followed the third line beginning with וְרֹאשׁ verosh. Then finding his mistake, to preserve the beauty of his copy, added at the end the distich which should have been in the middle; making that the second distich, which ought to have been the third. For

the order as it now stands is preposterous: the destruction of Ephraim is denounced, and then their grandeur is set forth; whereas naturally the representation of the grandeur of Ephraim should precede that of their destruction. And the destruction of Ephraim has no coherence with the grandeur of Syria, simply as such, which it now follows: but it naturally and properly follows the grandeur of Ephraim, joined to that of Syria their ally.

"The arrangement then of the whole sentence seems originally to have been thus: -

Though the head of Syria be Damascus, And the head of Damascus Retsin And the head of Ephraim be Samaria; And the head of Samaria Remaliah's son: Yet within threescore and five years Ephraim shall be broken that he be no more a people." Dr. Jubb.

**Threescore and five years** - It was sixty-five years from the beginning of the reign of Ahaz, when this prophecy was delivered, to the total depopulation of the kingdom of Israel by Esarhaddon, who carried away the remains of the ten tribes which had been left by Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmaneser, and who planted the country with new inhabitants. That the country was not wholly stripped of its inhabitants by Shalmaneser appears from many passages of the history of Josiah, where Israelites are mentioned as still remaining there, 2 Chronicles 34:6, 2 Chronicles 34:7, 2 Chronicles 34:33; 2 Chronicles 35:18; 2 Kings 23:19, 2 Kings 23:20. This seems to be the best explanation of the chronological difficulty in this place, which has much embarrassed the commentators: see Usserii Annal. 5. T. ad an. 3327, and Sir 1. Newton, Chronol. p. 283.

"That the last deportation of Israel by Esarhaddon was in the sixty-fifth year after the second of Ahaz, is probable for the following reasons: The Jews, in Seder Olam Rabba, and the Talmudists, in D. Kimchi on Ezekiel iv., say that Manasseh king of Judah was carried to Babylon by the king of Assyria's captains, 2 Chronicles 33:11, in the twenty-second year of his reign; that is, before Christ 676, according to Dr. Blair's tables. And they are probably right in this. It could not be much earlier; as the king of Assyria was not king of Babylon till 680, *ibid.* As Esarhaddon was then in the neighborhood of Samaria, it is highly probable that he did then carry away the last remains of Israel, and brought those strangers thither who mention him as their founder, Ezra 4:2. But this year is just the sixty-fifth from the second of Ahaz, which was 740 before Christ. Now the carrying away the remains of Israel, who, till then, though their kingdom was destroyed forty-five years before, and though small in number, might yet keep up some form of being a people, by living according to their own laws, entirely put an end to the people of Israel, as a people separate from all

others: for from this time they never returned to their own country in a body, but were confounded with the people of Judah in the captivity; and the whole people, the ten tribes included, were called Jews." - Dr. Jubb. Two MSS. have twenty-five instead of sixty-five; and two others omit the word five, reading only sixty.

**If ye will not believe "If ye believe not"** - "This clause is very much illustrated by considering the captivity of Manasseh as happening at the same time with this predicted final ruin of Ephraim as a people. The near connection of the two facts makes the prediction of the one naturally to cohere with the prediction of the other. And the words are well suited to this event in the history of the people of Judah: 'If ye believe not, ye shall not be established;' that is, unless ye believe this prophecy of the destruction of Israel, ye Jews also, as well as the people of Israel, shall not remain established as a kingdom and people; ye also shall be visited with punishment at the same time: as our Savior told the Jews in his time, 'Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;' intimating their destruction by the Romans; to which also, as well as to the captivity of Manasseh, and to the Babylonish captivity, the views of the prophet might here extend. The close connection of this threat to the Jews with the prophecy of the destruction of Israel, is another strong proof that the order of the preceding lines above proposed is right." - Dr. Jubb.

"If ye believe not in me." - The exhortation of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chronicles 20:20, to his people, when God had promised to them, by the prophet Jahaziel, victory over the Moabites and Ammonites, is very like this both in sense and expression, and seems to be delivered in verse:

"Hear me, O Judah; and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem;

Believe in Jehovah your God, and ye shall be established:

Believe his prophets, and ye shall prosper."

Where both the sense and construction render very probable a conjecture of Archbishop Secker on this place; that instead of כִּי ki, we should read בִּי bi . "If ye will not believe in me, ye shall not be established." So likewise Dr. Durell. The Chaldee has, "If ye will not believe in the words of the prophet;" which seems to be a paraphrase of the reading here proposed. In favor of which it may be farther observed that in one MS. כִּי ki is upon a rasure; and another for the last לֹא lo reads וְלֹא velo, which would properly follow בִּי bi, but could not follow כִּי ki .

Some translate thus, and paraphrase thus: If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established. Or, If ye do not give credit, it is because ye are unfaithful. Ye have not been faithful to the grace already given: therefore ye are now incapable of crediting my promises.

### **Verse 11**

**In the depth "Go deep to the grave"** - So Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and the Vulgate.

### **Verses 14-16. The great messianic sign itself**

#### **Verse 14**

**The Lord "Jehovah"** - For אֲדֹנָי Adonai, twenty-five of Kennicott's MSS., nine ancient, and fourteen of De Rossi's, read יְהוָה Jehovah . And so Isaiah 7:20, eighteen MSS.

**Immanuel** - For עִמָּנוּאֵל Immanuel, many MSS. and editions have אֵל immanu El, God with us.

#### **Verse 15**

**That he may know "When he shall know"** - "Though so much has been written on this important passage, there is an obscurity and inconsequence which still attends it, in the general run of all the interpretations given to it by the most learned. And this obscure incoherence is given to it by the false rendering of a Hebrew particle, viz., ל le, in לְדַעְתּוֹ ledato . This has been generally rendered, either 'that he may know,' or 'till he know.' It is capable of either version, without doubt; but either of these versions makes Isaiah 7:15; incoherent and inconsistent with Isaiah 7:16. For Isaiah 7:16; plainly means to give a reason for the assertion in Isaiah 7:16, because it is subjoined to it by the particle כִּי ki, for. But it is no reason why a child should eat butter and honey till he was at an age to distinguish, that before that time the land of his nativity should be free from its enemies. This latter supposition indeed implies, what is inconsistent with the preceding assertion. For it implies, that in part of that time of the infancy spoken of the land should not be free from enemies, and consequently these species of delicate food could not be attainable, as they are in times of peace. The other version, 'that he may know,' has no meaning at all; for what sense is there in asserting, that a child shall eat butter and honey that he may know to refuse evil and choose good? Is there any such effect in this food? Surely not. Besides, the child is thus represented to eat those things, which only a state of peace produces, during its whole infancy, inconsistently with Isaiah 7:16, which



promises a relief from enemies only before the end of this infancy: implying plainly, that part of it would be passed in distressful times of war and siege, which was the state of things when the prophecy was delivered.

"But all these objections are cut off, and a clear, coherent sense is given to this passage, by giving another sense to the particle ל le . which never occurred to me till I saw it in Harmer's Observat., vol. i., p. 299. See how coherent the words of the prophet run, with how natural a connection one clause follows another, by properly rendering this one particle: 'Behold this Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and thou shalt call his name Immanuel; butter and honey, shall he eat, when he shall know to refuse evil, and choose good. For before this child shall know to refuse evil and choose good, the land shall be desolate, by whose two kings thou art distressed.' Thus Isaiah 7:16; subjoins a plain reason why the child should eat butter and honey, the food of plentiful times, when he came to a distinguishing age; viz., because before that time the country of the two kings, who now distressed Judea, should be desolated; and so Judea should recover that plenty which attends peace. That this rendering, which gives perspicuity and rational connection to the passage, is according to the use of the Hebrew particle, is certain. Thus לִפְנוֹת בֹּקֶר liphnoth boker, 'at the appearing of morning, or when morning appeared,' Exodus 14:27; לֶעֵת הָאֵכֶל leeth haochel, 'at mealtime, or when it was time to eat,' Ruth 2:14. In the same manner, לִדְעָתוֹ ledato, 'at his knowing, that is, when he knows.'

"Harmer (ibid.) has clearly shown that these articles of food are delicacies in the East, and, as such, denote a state of plenty. See also Joshua 5:6. They therefore naturally express the plenty of the country, as a mark of peace restored to it. Indeed, in Isaiah 7:22; it expresses a plenty arising from the thinness of the people; but that it signifies, Isaiah 7:15, a plenty arising from deliverance from war then present, is evident; because otherwise there is no expression of this deliverance. And that a deliverance was intended to be here expressed is plain, from calling the child which should be born Immanuel, God with us. It is plain, also, because it is before given to the prophet in charge to make a declaration of the deliverance, Isaiah 7:3-7; and it is there made; and this prophecy must undoubtedly be conformable to that in this matter." - Dr. Jubb.

The circumstance of the child's eating butter and honey is explained by Jarchi, as denoting a state of plenty: "Butter and honey shall this child eat, because our land shall be full of all good." Comment in locum. The infant Jupiter, says Callimachus, was tenderly nursed with goat's milk and honey. Hymn, in Jov. 48. Homer, of the orphan daughters of Pandareus: -

Κομίσσε δε δι' Ἀφροδίτη-144 Τυρῶ καὶ μελίτι γλυκερῶ, καὶ ἦδει οἰνωπ .

*Odyss. XX., 68.*

"Venus in tender delicacy rears

With honey, milk, and wine, their infant years."

Τρυφῆς ἐστὶν ἐνδειξις ; "This is a description of delicate food," says Eustathius on the place.

Agreeably to the observations communicated by the learned person above mentioned, which perfectly well explain the historical sense of this much disputed passage, not excluding a higher secondary sense, the obvious and literal meaning of the prophecy is this: "that within the time that a young woman, now a virgin, should conceive and bring forth a child, and that child should arrive at such an age as to distinguish between good and evil, that is, within a few years, (compare Isaiah 8:4;), the enemies of Judah should be destroyed." But the prophecy is introduced in so solemn a manner; the sign is so marked, as a sign selected and given by God himself, after Ahaz had rejected the offer of any sign of his own choosing out of the whole compass of nature; the terms of the prophecy are so peculiar, and the name of the child so expressive, containing in them much more than the circumstances of the birth of a common child required, or even admitted; that we may easily suppose that, in minds prepared by the general expectation of a great Deliverer to spring from the house of David, they raised hopes far beyond what the present occasion suggested; especially when it was found, that in the subsequent prophecy, delivered immediately afterward, this child, called Immanuel, is treated as the Lord and Prince of the land of Judah. Who could this be, other than the heir of the throne of David; under which character a great and even a Divine person had been promised? No one of that age answered to this character except Hezekiah; but he was certainly born nine or ten years before the delivery of this prophecy. That this was so understood at that time is collected, I think, with great probability, from a passage of Micah, a prophet contemporary with Isaiah, but who began to prophesy after him; and who, as I have already observed, imitated him, and sometimes used his expressions. Micah, having delivered that remarkable prophecy which determines the place of the birth of Messiah, "the Ruler of God's people, whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting;" that it should be Bethlehem Ephrathah; adds immediately, that nevertheless, in the mean time, God would deliver his people into the hands of their enemies: "He will give them up, till she, who is to bear a child, shall bring forth," Micah 5:3. This obviously and plainly refers to some known prophecy concerning a woman to bring forth a child; and seems much more properly applicable to this passage of Isaiah than to any others of the same prophet, to which some interpreters have

applied it. St. Matthew, therefore, in applying this prophecy to the birth of Christ, does it, not merely in the way of accommodating the words of the prophet to a suitable case not in the prophet's view, but takes it in its strictest, clearest, and most important sense; and applies it according to the original design and principal intention of the prophet.

After all this learned criticism, I think something is still wanting to diffuse the proper light over this important prophecy. On Matthew 1:23; I have given what I judge to be the true meaning and right application of the whole passage, as there quoted by the evangelist, the substance of which it will be necessary to repeat here: -

At the time referred to, the kingdom of Judah, under the government of Ahaz, was reduced very low. Pekah, king of Israel, had slain in Judea one hundred and twenty thousand persons in one day; and carried away captives two hundred thousand, including women and children, together with much spoil. To add to their distress, Rezin, king of Syria, being confederate with Pekah, had taken Elath, a fortified city of Judah, and carried the inhabitants away captive to Damascus. In this critical conjuncture, need we wonder that Ahaz was afraid that the enemies who were now united against him must prevail, destroy Jerusalem, end the kingdom of Judah, and annihilate the family of David? To meet and remove this fear, apparently well grounded, Isaiah is sent from the Lord to Ahaz, swallowed up now both by sorrow and by unbelief, in order to assure him that the counsels of his enemies should not stand; and that they should be utterly discomfited. To encourage Ahaz, he commands him to ask a sign or miracle, which should be a pledge in hand, that God should, in due time, fulfill the predictions of his servant, as related in the context. On Ahaz humbly refusing to ask any sign, it is immediately added, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat," etc. Both the Divine and human nature of our Lord, as well as the miraculous conception, appear to be pointed out in the prophecy quoted here by the evangelist: He shall be called עִמָּנוּאֵל Immanuel ; literally, The Strong God with Us: similar to those words in the New Testament: The word which was God - was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; John 1:1, John 1:14. And God was manifested in the flesh, 1 Timothy 3:16. So that we are to understand God with us to imply, God incarnated - God in human nature. This seems farther evident from the words of the prophet, Isaiah 7:15; : Butter and honey shall he eat - he shall be truly man - grow up and be nourished in a human natural way; which refers to his being With Us, i.e., incarnated. To which the prophet adds, That he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good; or rather, According to his knowledge, לְדַעַתוֹ ledato, reprobating the evil, and choosing the good; this refers

to him as God, and is the same idea given by this prophet, chap. Isaiah 53:11; : By (or in) his knowledge, בדעתו bedato, (the knowledge of Christ crucified), shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their offenses. Now this union of the Divine and human nature is termed a sign or miracle, אות oth, i.e., something which exceeds the power of nature to produce. And this miraculous union was to be brought about in a miraculous way: Behold, a Virgin shall conceive: the word is very emphatic, העלמה haalmah, The virgin; the only one that ever was, or ever shall be, a mother in this way. But the Jews, and some called Christians, who have espoused their desperate cause, assert that "the word עלמה almah does not signify a Virgin only; for it is applied Proverbs 30:19; to signify a young married woman." I answer, that this latter text is no proof of the contrary doctrine: the words דרך גבר בעלמה derech geber bealmah, the way of a man with a maid, cannot be proved to mean that for which it is produced. Besides, one of De Rossi's MSS. reads בעלמאי bealmaiv, the way of a strong or stout man (גבר geber ) In His Youth; and in this reading the Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, and Arabic agree; which are followed by the first version in the English language, as it stands in a MS. in my own possession: the weie of a man in his waxing youth: so that this place, the only one that can with any probability of success be produced, were the interpretation contended for correct, which I am by no means disposed to admit, proves nothing. Besides, the consent of so many versions in the opposite meaning deprives it of much of its influence in this question.

The word עלמה almah, comes from עלם alam, to lie hid, be concealed: and we are told, that "virgins were so called, because they were concealed or closely kept up in their father's houses till the time of their marriage." This is not correct: see the case of Rebecca, Genesis 24:43; (note), and my note there; that of Rachel, Genesis 29:6-9; (note), and the note there also; and see the case of Miriam, the sister of Moses, Exodus 2:8, and also the Chaldee paraphrase on Lamentations 1:4, where the virgins are represented as going out in the dance. And see also the whole history of Ruth. This being concealed or kept at home, on which so much stress is laid, is purely fanciful; for we find that young unmarried women drew water, kept sheep, gleaned publicly in the fields, etc., etc., and the same works they perform among the Turcomans to the present day. This reason, therefore, does not account for the radical meaning of the word; and we must seek it elsewhere. Another well-known and often-used root in the Hebrew tongue will cast light on this subject. This is גלה galah, which signifies to reveal, make manifest, or uncover; and is often applied to matrimonial connections in different parts of the Mosaic law: עלם alam, therefore, may be considered as implying the concealment of the virgin, as such, till lawful, marriage had taken place. A virgin was not called עלמה almah, because she was concealed by being kept at home in her father's house, which is not true; but, literally and physically,

because as a woman she had not been uncovered - she had not known man. This fully applies to the blessed virgin, see Luke 1:34. "How can this be, seeing I know no man?" And this text throws much light on the subject before us. This also is in perfect agreement with the ancient prophecy, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent," Genesis 3:15; for the person who was to destroy the work of the devil was to be the progeny of the woman, without any concurrence of the man. And hence the text in Genesis speaks as fully of the virgin state of the person from whom Christ, according to the flesh, should come, as that in the prophet, or this in the evangelist. According to the original promise there was to be a seed, a human being, who should destroy sin: but this seed or human being, must come from the woman Alone; and no woman Alone could produce such a human being without being a virgin. Hence, A virgin shall bear a son, is the very spirit and meaning of the original text, independently of the illustration given by the prophet; and the fact recorded by the evangelist is the proof of the whole. But how could that be a sign to Ahaz which was to take place so many hundreds of years after? I answer, the meaning of the prophet is plain: not only Rezin and Pekah should be unsuccessful against Jerusalem at that time, which was the fact; but Jerusalem, Judea, and the house of David should be both preserved, notwithstanding their depressed state, and the multitude of their adversaries, till the time should come when a Virgin should bear a son. This is a most remarkable circumstance the house of David could never fail, till a virgin should conceive and bear a son - nor did it: but when that incredible and miraculous fact did take place, the kingdom and house of David became extinct! This is an irrefragable confutation of every argument a Jew can offer in vindication of his opposition to the Gospel of Christ. Either the prophecy in Isaiah has been fulfilled, or the kingdom and house of David are yet standing. But the kingdom of David, we know, is destroyed: and where is the man, Jew or Gentile, that can show us a single descendant of David on the face of the earth? The prophecy could not fail: the kingdom and house of David have failed; the virgin, therefore, must have brought forth her son, and this son is Jesus, the Christ. Thus Moses, Isaiah, and Matthew concur; and facts the most unequivocal have confirmed the whole! Behold the wisdom and providence of God!

Notwithstanding what has been said above, it may be asked, In what sense could this name, Immanuel, be applied to Jesus Christ, if he be not truly and properly God? Could the Spirit of truth ever design that Christians should receive him as an angel or a mere man; and yet, in the very beginning of the Gospel history, apply a character to him which belongs only to the most high God? Surely no. In what sense, then, is Christ God with Us? Jesus is called Immanuel, or God with us, in his incarnation; God united to our nature; God with man, God in man; God with us, by his continual protection; God with us, by the influences of his Holy Spirit, in the holy sacrament, in the preaching of his word, in private

prayer. And God with us, through every action of our life, that we begin, continue, and end in his name. He is God with us, to comfort, enlighten, protect, and defend us, in every time of temptation and trial, in the hour of death, in the day of judgment; and God with us and in us, and we with and in him, to all eternity.

## **Verses 17-25. Threatened punishment of Ahaz**

### **Isaiah 7:17:**

**The Lord shall bring "But Jehovah will bring"** - Houbigant reads וביא vaiyabi, from the Septuagint, ἀλλὰ ἐπαξει ὁ Θεός, to mark the transition to a new subject.

**Even the king of Assyria** - Houbigant supposes these words to have been a marginal gloss, brought into the text by mistake; and so likewise Archbishop Secker. Besides their having no force or effect here, they do not join well in construction with the words preceding, as may be seen by the strange manner in which the ancient interpreters have taken them; and they very inelegantly forestall the mention of the king of Assyria, which comes in with great propriety in the 20th verse ( Isaiah 7:20;). I have therefore taken the liberty of omitting them in the translation.

### **Verse 18**

**Hiss for the fly "Hist the fly"** - See note on Isaiah 5:26.

**Egypt, and - Assyria** - Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, Pharaoh-necho, and Nebuchadnezzar, who one after another desolated Judea.

### **Verse 19**

**Holes of the rocks "Caverns"** - So the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, whence Houbigant supposes the true reading to be הנחללים hannachalolim . One of my oldest MSS. reads הנחלולים hanochalolim .

### **Verse 20**

**The river** - That is, the Euphrates: הנהר hanahar . So read the Septuagint and two MSS.

**Shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired "Jehovah shall shave by the hired razor"** - To shave with the hired razor the head, the feet, and the beard, is

an expression highly parabolical, to denote the utter devastation of the country from one end to the other; and the plundering of the people, from the highest to the lowest, by the Assyrians, whom God employed as his instrument to punish the Jews. Ahaz himself, in the first place, hired the king of Assyria to come to help him against the Syrians, by a present made to him of all the treasures of the temple, as well as his own. And God himself considered the great nations, whom he thus employed as his mercenaries; and paid them their wages. Thus he paid Nebuchadnezzar for his services against Tyre, by the conquest of Egypt, Ezekiel 29:18-20. The hairs of the head are those of the highest order in the state; those of the feet, or the lower parts, are the common people; the beard is the king, the high priest, the very supreme in dignity and majesty. The Eastern people have always held the beard in the highest veneration, and have been extremely jealous of its honor. To pluck a man's beard is an instance of the greatest indignity that can be offered. See Isaiah 50:6. The king of the Ammonites, to show the utmost contempt of David, "cut off half the beards of his servants, and the men were greatly ashamed; and David bade them tarry at Jericho till their beards were grown," 2 Samuel 10:4, 2 Samuel 10:6. Niebuhr, *Arabie*, p. 275, gives a modern instance of the very same kind of insult. "The Turks," says Thevenot, "greatly esteem a man who has a fine beard; it is a very great affront to take a man by his beard, unless it be to kiss it; they swear by the beard." *Voyages*, i., p. 57. D'Arvieux gives a remarkable instance of an Arab, who, having received a wound in his jaw, chose to hazard his life, rather than suffer his surgeon to take off his beard. *Memoires*, tom. iii., p. 214. See also Niebuhr, *Arabie*, p. 61.

The remaining verses of this chapter, Isaiah 7:21-25, contain an elegant and very expressive description of a country depopulated, and left to run wild, from its adjuncts and circumstances: the vineyards and cornfields, before well cultivated, now overrun with briars and thorns; much grass, so that the few cattle that are left, a young cow and two sheep, have their full range, and abundant pasture, so as to yield milk in plenty to the scanty family of the owner; the thinly scattered people living, not on corn, wine, and oil, the produce of cultivation; but on milk and honey, the gifts of nature; and the whole land given up to the wild beasts, so that the miserable inhabitants are forced to go out armed with bows and arrows, either to defend themselves against the wild beasts, or to supply themselves with necessary food by hunting.

A Very judicious friend has sent me the following observations on the preceding prophecy, which I think worthy of being laid before the reader; though they are in some respects different from my own view of the subject.

"To establish the primary and literal meaning of a passage of Scripture is evidently laying the true foundation for any subsequent views or improvements from it.

"The kingdom of Judah, under the government of Ahaz, was reduced very low. Pekah, king of Israel, had slain in Judea one hundred and twenty thousand in one day; and carried away captive two hundred thousand including women and children, with much spoil. To add to this distress, Rezin, king of Syria, being confederate with Pekah, had taken Elath, a fortified city of Judah, and carried the inhabitants to Damascus. I think it may also be gathered from the sixth verse of chap. 8, that the kings of Syria and Israel had a considerable party in the land of Judea, who, regardless of the Divine appointment and promises, were disposed to favor the elevation of Tabeal, a stranger, to the throne of David.

"In this critical conjuncture of affairs, Isaiah was sent with a message of mercy, and a promise of deliverance, to Ahaz. He was commanded to take with him Shearjashub, his son whose name contained a promise respecting the captives lately made by Pekah, whose return from Samaria, effected by the expostulation of the prophet Oded and the concurrence of the princes of Ephraim, was now promised as a pledge of the Divine interposition offered to Ahaz in favor of the house of David. And as a farther token of this preservation, notwithstanding the incredulity of Ahaz, Isaiah was directed to predict the birth of another son which should be born to him within the space of a year, and to be named Emmanuel, signifying thereby the protection of God to the land of Judah and family of David at this present conjuncture, with reference to the promise of the Messiah who was to spring from that family, and be born in that land. Compare Isaiah 8:8. Hence Isaiah testifies, Isaiah 8:18; : 'Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for types in Israel.' Compare Zechariah 3:8; : 'Thy companions are men of sign and type:' see Dr. Lowth on this verse. The message of Divine displeasure against Israel is in like manner expressed by the names the prophet Hosea was directed to give his children; see Hosea 1:1-11; and 2.

"Concerning this child, who was to be named Immanuel, the prophet was commissioned to declare, that notwithstanding the present scarcity prevailing in the land from its being harassed by war, yet within the space of time wherein this child should be of age to discern good and evil, both these hostile kings, viz., of Israel and Syria, should be cut off; and the country enjoy such plenty, that butter and honey, food accounted of peculiar delicacy, should be a common repast. See Harmer's Observations, p. 299.



"To this it may be objected that Isaiah's son was not named Immanuel, but Maher-shalal-hash-baz; the signification of which bore a threatening aspect, instead of a consolatory one. To this I think a satisfactory answer may be given. Ahaz, by his unbelief and disregard of the message of mercy sent to him from God, (for instead of depending upon it he sent and made a treaty with the king of Assyria), drew upon himself the Divine displeasure, which was expressed by the change of the child's name, and the declaration that though Damascus and Samaria should, according to the former prediction, fall before the king of Assyria, yet that this very power, i.e., Assyria, in whom Ahaz trusted for deliverance, (see 2 Kings 16:7, etc.), should afterwards come against Judah, and 'fill the breadth of the land,' which was accomplished in the following reign, when Jerusalem was so endangered as to be delivered only by miracle. The sixth and seventh verses of chap. 8 indicate, I think, as I before observed, that the kings of Syria and Israel had many adherents in Judah, who are said to refuse the peaceful waters of Shiloah or Siloam, *him that is to be sent*, who ought to have been their confidence, typified by the fountain at the foot of Mount Zion, whose stream watered the city of Jerusalem; and therefore, since the splendor of victory, rather than the blessings of peace, was the object of their admiration, compared to a swelling river which overflowed its banks, God threatens to chastise them by the victorious armies of Ashur. The prophet at the same time addresses words of consolation to such of the people who yet feared and trusted in Jehovah, whom he instructs and comforts with the assurance ( Isaiah 8:10;) that they shall prove the fulfillment of the promise contained in the name Immanuel.

"But it may still be objected, that according to this interpretation of the fourteenth verse of chap. 7 nothing miraculous occurs, which is readily admitted; but the objection rests upon the supposition that something miraculous was intended; whereas the word אוֹת oth, 'sign,' does by no means generally imply a miracle, but most commonly an emblematic representation, (see Ezekiel 4:3-12; 11; Ezekiel 20:20; Zechariah 6:14;), either by actions or names, of some future event either promised or threatened. Exodus 3:12; 1 Samuel 2:34; 2 Kings 19:29; Jeremiah 44:29, Jeremiah 44:30, are all examples of a future event given as a sign or token of something else which is also future. The birth of Isaiah's son was indeed typical of him whose name he was, at first, appointed to bear, viz., Immanuel, even as Oshea the son of Nun had his name changed to Jehoshua, the same with Jesus, of whom he was an eminent type. Hence the prophet, in the ninth chapter, breaks forth into a strain of exultation: 'To us a child is born;' after which follow denunciations against Rezin and the kingdom of Israel, which are succeeded by declarations, that when Assyria had completed the appointed chastisement upon Judah and Jerusalem, that empire should be

destroyed. The whole of the tenth chapter is a very remarkable prophecy, and was probably delivered about the time of Sennacherib's invasion.

"But still it will be urged, that St. Matthew, when relating the miraculous conception of our Lord, says, 'Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet,' etc. To this it may readily be answered, that what was spoken by the prophet was indeed now fulfilled in a higher, more important, and also in a more literal sense, than the primary fulfillment could afford, which derived all its value from its connection with this event, to which it ultimately referred.

"In like manner the prophecy of Isaiah, contained in the second chapter, received a complete fulfillment in our Savior's honoring Capernaum with his residence, and preaching throughout Galilee; though there appears reason to interpret the passage as having a primary respect to the reformation wrought by Hezekiah and which, at the eve of the dissolution of the kingdom of Israel by the captivity of the ten tribes, extended to the tribes of Asher and Zebulun, and many of the inhabitants of Ephraim and Manasseh, who were hereby stirred up to destroy idolatry in their country. See 2 Chronicles 31:1. And without doubt the great deliverance wrought afterwards for Judah by the miraculous destruction of Sennacherib's army, and the recovery of Hezekiah in so critical a conjuncture from a sickness which had been declared to be unto death, contributed not a little to revive the fear of God in that part of Israel which, through their defection from the house of David, had grievously departed from the temple and worship of the true God; and as Galilee lay contiguous to countries inhabited by Gentiles, they had probably sunk deeper into idolatry than the southern part of Israel.

"In several passages of St. Matthew's Gospel, our translation conveys the idea of things being done in order to fulfill certain prophecies; but I apprehend that if the words ἵνα καὶ ὅπως were rendered as simply denoting the event, so that and thus was fulfilled, the sense would be much clearer. For it is obvious that our Lord did not speak in parables or ride into Jerusalem previously to his last passover, simply for the purpose of fulfilling the predictions recorded, but also from other motives; and in chap. 2 the evangelist only remarks that the circumstance of our Lord's return from Egypt corresponded with the prophet Hosea's relation of that part of the history of the Israelites. So in the twenty-third verse Joseph dwelt at Nazareth because he was directed so to do by God himself; and the sacred historian, having respect to the effect afterwards produced, (see John 7:41, John 7:42, John 7:52;), remarks that this abode in Nazareth was a means of fulfilling those predictions of the prophets which indicate the contempt and neglect with which by many the Messiah should be

treated. Galilee was considered by the inhabitants of Judea as a degraded place, chiefly from its vicinity to the Gentiles; and Nazareth seems to have been proverbially contemptible; and from the account given of the spirit and conduct of the inhabitants by the evangelists, not without reason." - E. M. B.

To my correspondent, as well as to many learned men, there appears some difficulty in the text; but I really think this is quite done away by that mode of interpretation which I have already adopted; and as far as the miraculous conception is concerned, the whole is set in the clearest and strongest light, and the objections and cavils of the Jeers entirely destroyed.

## **Chapter 8**

### **8:1-9:7. Present deliverance a precursor to future deliverer (second discourse)**

#### **Introduction**

Prediction respecting the conquest of Syria and Israel by the Assyrians, Isaiah 8:1-4. Israel, for rejecting the gentle stream of Shiloah, near Jerusalem, is threatened to be overflowed by the great river of Assyria, manifestly alluding by this strong figure to the conquests of Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser over that kingdom, Isaiah 8:5-7. The invasion of the kingdom of Judah by the Assyrians under Sennacherib foretold, Isaiah 8:8. The prophet assures the Israelites and Syrians that their hostile attempts against Judah shall be frustrated, Isaiah 8:9, Isaiah 8:10. Exhortation not to be afraid of the wrath of man, but to fear the displeasure of God, Isaiah 8:11-13. Judgments which shall overtake those who put no confidence in Jehovah, Isaiah 8:14, Isaiah 8:15. The prophet proceeds to warn his countrymen against idolatry, divination, and the like sinful practices, exhorting them to seek direction from the word of God, professing in a beautiful apostrophe that this was his own pious resolution. And to enforce this counsel, and strengthen their faith, he points to his children, whose symbolic names were signs or pledges of the Divine promises, Isaiah 8:16-20. Judgments of God against the finally impenitent, Isaiah 8:21, Isaiah 8:22.

The prophecy of the foregoing chapter relates directly to the kingdom of Judah only: the first part of it promises them deliverance from the united invasion of the Israelites and Syrians; the latter part, from Isaiah 8:17, denounces the desolation to be brought upon the kingdom of Judah by the Assyrians. The sixth, seventh, and eighth verses of this chapter seem to take in both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. "This people that refuseth the waters of Shiloah," may be meant of both: the Israelites despised the kingdom of Judah, which they had deserted, and now attempted to destroy; the people of Judah, from a

consideration of their own weakness, and a distrust of God's promises, being reduced to despair, applied to the Assyrians for assistance against the two confederate kings. But how could it be said of Judah, that they rejoiced in Rezin, and the son of Remaliah, the enemies confederated against them? If some of the people were inclined to revolt to the enemy, (which however does not clearly appear from any part of the history or the prophecy), yet there was nothing like a tendency to a general defection. This, therefore, must be understood of Israel. The prophet denounces the Assyrian invasion, which should overwhelm the whole kingdom of Israel under Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmaneser; and the subsequent invasion of Judah by the same power under Sennacherib, which would bring them into the most imminent danger, like a flood reaching to the neck, in which a man can but just keep his head above water. The two next verses, Isaiah 8:9,23; 8:10, are addressed by the prophet, as a subject of the kingdom of Judah, to the Israelites and Syrians, and perhaps to all the enemies of God's people; assuring them that their attempts against that kingdom shall be fruitless; for that the promised Immanuel, to whom he alludes by using his name to express the signification of it, for God is with us, shall be the defense of the house of David, and deliver the kingdom of Judah out of their hands. He then proceeds to warn the people of Judah against idolatry, divination, and the like forbidden practices; to which they were much inclined, and which would soon bring down God's judgments upon Israel. The prophecy concludes at the sixth verse of chap. 9 with promises of blessings in future times by the coming of the great deliverer already pointed out by the name of Immanuel, whose person and character is set forth in terms the most ample and magnificent.

And here it may be observed that it is almost the constant practice of the prophet to connect in like manner deliverances temporal with spiritual. Thus the eleventh chapter, setting forth the kingdom of Messiah, is closely connected with the tenth, which foretells the destruction of Sennacherib. So likewise the destruction of nations, enemies to God, in the thirty-fourth chapter, introduces the flourishing state of the kingdom of Christ in the thirty-fifth. And thus the chapters from 40 to 49 inclusive, plainly relating to the deliverance from the captivity of Babylon, do in some parts plainly relate to the greater deliverance by Christ.

### **8:1-4. The fall of Damascus and Samaria prefigured**

#### **Verse 1**

**Take thee a great roll "Take unto thee a large mirror"** - The word גליון gillayon is not regularly formed from גלל galal, to roll, but from גלה galah, as פדיון pidyon from פדה padah, כליון killayon from כלה , calah, נקיון nikkayon from

נקה nakah, עליון elyon from עלה alah, etc., the י yod supplying the place of the radical ה he . גלה galah signifies to show, to reveal; properly, as Schroederus says, (*De Vestitu Mulier. Hebr. p. 294*), to render clear and bright by rubbing; to polish. גליון gillayon, therefore, according to this derivation, is not a roll or volume: but may very well signify a polished tablet of metal, such as was anciently used for a mirror. The Chaldee paraphrast renders it by לוח luach, a tablet, and the same word, though somewhat differently pointed, the Chaldee paraphrast and the rabbins render a mirror, Isaiah 3:23. The mirrors of the Israelitish women were made of brass finely polished, Exodus 38:8, from which place it likewise appears that what they used were little hand mirrors which they carried with them even when they assembled at the door of the tabernacle. I have a metalline mirror found in Herculaneum, which is not above three inches square. The prophet is commanded to take a mirror, or brazen polished tablet, not like these little hand mirrors, but a large one; large enough for him to engrave upon it in deep and lasting characters, בחרט אנוש becheret enosh, with a workman's graving tool, the prophecy which he was to deliver. חרט cheret in this place certainly signifies an instrument to write or engrave with: but חרית charit, the same word, only differing a little in the form, means something belonging to a lady's dress, Isaiah 3:22, (where however five MSS. leave out the י yod, whereby only it differs from the word in this place), either a crimping-pin, which might be not unlike a graving tool, as some will have it, or a purse, as others infer from 2 Kings 5:23. It may therefore be called here חרט אנוש cheret enosh, a workman's instrument, to distinguish it from חרט אשה cheret ishshah, an instrument of the same name, used by the women. In this manner he was to record the prophecy of the destruction of Damascus and Samaria by the Assyrians; the subject and sum of which prophecy is here expressed with great brevity in four words, מהר שלל הש בז maher shalal hash baz ; i.e., to hasten the spoil, to take quickly the prey; which are afterwards applied as the name of the prophet's son, who was made a sign of the speedy completion of it; Maher-shalal-hash-baz; Haste-to-the-spoil, Quick-to-the-prey. And that it might be done with the greater solemnity, and to preclude all doubt of the real delivery of the prophecy before the event, he calls witnesses to attest the recording of it.

The prophet is commanded to take a great roll, and yet four words only are to be written in it, מהר שלל הש בז maher shalal hash baz, Make haste to the spoil; fall upon the prey. The great volume points out the land of Judea; and the few words the small number of inhabitants, after the ten tribes were carried into captivity.

The words were to be written with a man's pen; i.e., though the prophecy be given in the visions of God, yet the writing must be real; the words must be transcribed on the great roll, that they may be read and publicly consulted. Or, חרט אנוש cherot enosh, the pen or graver of the weak miserable man, may refer to

the already condemned Assyrians, who though they should be the instruments of chastening Damascus and Samaria, should themselves shortly be overthrown. The four words may be considered as the commission given to the Assyrians to destroy and spoil the cities. Make haste to the spoil; Fall upon the prey, etc.

#### **Verse 4**

**For before the child** - For my father and my mother, one MS. and the Vulgate have his father and his mother. The prophecy was accordingly accomplished within three years; when Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, went up against Damascus and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin, and also took the Reubenites and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and carried them captive to Assyria, 2 Kings 15:29; 2 Kings 16:9; 1 Chronicles 5:26.

#### **8:5-8. The choice of unbelief and its results**

#### **Verse 6**

**Forasmuch as this people refuseth "Because this people have rejected"** - The gentle waters of Shiloah, a small fountain and brook just without Jerusalem, which supplied a pool within the city for the use of the inhabitants, is an apt emblem of the state of the kingdom and house of David, much reduced in its apparent strength, yet supported by the blessing of God; and is finely contrasted with the waters of the Euphrates, great, rapid, and impetuous; the image of the Babylonian empire, which God threatens to bring down like a mighty flood upon all these apostates of both kingdoms, as punishment for their manifold iniquities, and their contemptuous disregard of his promises. The brook and the river are put for the kingdoms to which they belong, and the different states of which respectively they most aptly represent. Juvenal, inveighing against the corruption of Rome by the importation of Asiatic manners, says, with great elegance, that "the Orontes has been long discharging itself into the Tiber:" -

*Jampridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes.*

And Virgil, to express the submission of some of the Eastern countries to the Roman arms, says: -

*Euphrates ibat jam mollior undis.*

*Aen. 8:726.*

"The waters of the Euphrates now flowed more humbly and gently."

But the happy contrast between the brook and the river gives a peculiar beauty to this passage of the prophet, with which the simple figure in the Roman poets, however beautiful, yet uncontrasted, cannot contend.

### Verse 8

**He shall reach even to the neck** - He compares Jerusalem, says Kimchi, to the head of the human body. As when the waters come up to a man's neck, he is very near drowning, (for a little increase of them would go over his head), so the king of Assyria coming up to Jerusalem was like a flood reaching to the neck - the whole country was overflowed, and the capital was in imminent danger. Accordingly the Chaldee renders reaching to the neck by reaching to Jerusalem.

## 8:9-15. The challenge of God's grace

### Verse 9

**Associate yourselves "Know ye this"** - God by his prophet plainly declares to the confederate adversaries of Judah, and bids them regard and attend to his declaration, that all their efforts shall be in vain.

The present reading, רעו rou, is subject to many difficulties; I follow that of the Septuagint, דעו deu, γινωσκετε. Archbishop Secker approves this reading. דעו deu know ye this, is parallel and synonymous to האזינו haazinu, give ear to It, in the next line. The Septuagint have likewise very well paraphrased the conclusion of this verse: "When ye have strengthened yourselves, ye shall be broken; and though ye again strengthen yourselves, again shall ye be broken;" taking חתו chottu as meaning the same with נשברו , shall be broken.

### Verse 11

**With a strong hand "As taking me by the hand"** - Eleven MSS., (two ancient), of Kennicott's, thirty-four of De Rossi's, and seven editions, read כחזקת kechezkath ; and so Symmachus, the Syriac, and Vulgate. Or rather with a strong hand, that is, with a strong and powerful influence of the prophetic Spirit.

### Verse 12

**Say ye not, A confederacy "Say ye not, It is holy"** - קשר keshher . Both the reading and the sense of this word are doubtful. The Septuagint manifestly read קשה kashah ; for they render it by σκληρον, hard. The Syriac and Chaldee render it מרדה merda, and מרוד merod, rebellion. How they came by this sense of the word, or what they read in their copies, is not so clear. But the worst of it is, that

neither of these readings or renderings gives any clear sense in this place. For why should God forbid his faithful servants to say with the unbelieving Jews, It is hard; or, There is a rebellion; or, as our translators render it, a confederacy? And how can this be called "walking in the way of this people?" Isaiah 8:11, which usually means, following their example, joining with them in religious worship. Or what confederacy do they mean? The union of the kingdoms of Syria and Israel against Judah? That was properly a league between two independent states, not an unlawful conspiracy of one part against another in the same state; this is the meaning of the word קשר keshher . For want of any satisfactory interpretation of this place that I can meet with, I adopt a conjecture of Archbishop Secker, which he proposes with great diffidence, and even seems immediately to give up, as being destitute of any authority to support it. I will give it in his own words:

*"Videri potest ex cap. Isaiah 5:16, et hujus cap. Isaiah 8:13, Isaiah 8:14, Isaiah 8:19, legendum קרש vel קדוש kadosh, eadem sententia, qua אלהינו Eloheynu, Hosea 14:3. Sed nihil necesse est. Vide enim Jeremiah 11:9; Ezekiel 22:25. Optime tamen sic responderent huic versiculo versiculi Isaiah 8:13, Isaiah 8:14."*

The passages of Jeremiah and Ezekiel above referred to seem to me not at all to clear up the sense of the word קשר keshher in this place. But the context greatly favors the conjecture here given, and makes it highly probable: "Walk not in the way of this people; call not their idols holy, nor fear ye the object of their fear:" (that is, the θεοβασματα, or gods of the idolaters; for so fear here signifies, to wit, the thing feared. So God is called "The fear of Isaac," Genesis 31:42, Genesis 31:53;): "but look up to Jehovah as your Holy One; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread; and he shall be a holy Refuge unto you." Here there is a harmony and consistency running through the whole sentence; and the latter part naturally arises out of the former, and answers to it. Idolatry, however, is full of fears. The superstitious fears of the Hindoos are very numerous. They fear death, bad spirits generally, and hobgoblins of all descriptions. They fear also the cries of jackals, owls, crows, cats, asses, vultures, dogs, lizards, etc. They also dread different sights in the air, and are alarmed at various dreams. See Ward's Customs. Observe that the difference between קשר keshher and קדש kadosh is chiefly in the transposition of the two last letters, for the letters ר resh and ד dalet are hardly distinguishable in some copies, printed as well as MS.; so that the mistake, in respect of the letters themselves, is a very easy and a very common one. - L.



## Verse 14

**And he shall be for a sanctuary "And he shall be unto you a sanctuary" -** The word לכם *lachem*, unto you, absolutely necessary, as I conceive, to the sense, is lost in this place: it is preserved by the Vulgate, "*et erit vobis in sanctificationem.*" The Septuagint have it in the singular number: εἰς σε ἁγιασμον, it shall be to Thee. Or else, instead of מקדש *mikdash*, a sanctuary, we must read מוקש *mokesh*, a snare, which would then be repeated without any propriety or elegance, at the end of the verse. The Chaldee reads instead of it משפט *mishpat*, judgment; for he renders it by פורען *purean*, which word frequently answers to משפט *mishpat* in his paraphrase. One MS. has in stead of וּלְאַבְן מִקְדָּשׁ *mikdash uleeben*, לאבן להם *lahem leeben*, which clears the sense and construction. But the reading of the Vulgate is, I think, the best remedy to this difficulty; and is in some degree authorized by להם *lahem*, the reading of the MS. above mentioned.

## 8:16-20. The challenge to trust God's grace alone

### Verse 16

**Among my disciples** - בלמדי *belimmudai* . The Septuagint render it τοῦ μαθητοῦ . Bishop Chandler, *Defence of Christianity*, p. 308, thinks they read מלמד *melamed*, that it be not understood, and approves of this reading. - Abp. Secker.

### Verse 18

**Lord of hosts** - One MS. reads אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת *Elohey tsebaoth*, God of hosts.

### Verse 19

**Should not a people seek "Should they seek"** - After ידרש *yidrosh*, the Septuagint, repeating the word, read הידרש *hayidrosh* : Οὐκ εἴθεός τις ἑαυτοῦ ἀναζητήσους; τί ἀναζητήσους περὶ τῶν ζώντων τοὺς νεκρούς ; Should not a nation seek unto its God? Why should you seek unto the dead concerning the living? and this repetition of the verb seems necessary to the sense; and, as Procopius on the place observes, it strongly expresses the prophet's indignation at their folly.

### Verse 20

**To the law and to the testimony "Unto the command, and unto the testimony"** - "Is not תְּעוּדָה *teudah* here the attested prophecy, Isaiah 8:1-4;? and perhaps תּוֹרָה *torah* the command, Isaiah 8:11-15;? for it means sometimes a

particular, and even a human, command; see Proverbs 6:20, and Proverbs 7:1, Proverbs 7:2, where it is ordered to be hid, that is, secretly kept." - Abp. Secker. So Deschamps, in his translation, or rather paraphrase, understands it: "*Tenons nous a l'instrument authentique mis en depot par ordre du Seigneur,*" "Let us stick to the authentic instrument, laid up by the command of the Lord." If this be right, the sixteenth verse must be understood in the same manner.

**Because there is no light in them "In which there is no obscurity" - שחר** shachor, as an adjective, frequently signifies dark, obscure; and the noun שחר shachar signifies darkness, gloominess, Joel 2:2, if we may judge by the context:

"A day of darkness and obscurity;

Of cloud, and of thick vapor;

As the gloom spread upon the mountains:

A people mighty and numerous."

Where the gloom, שחר shachar, seems to be the same with the cloud and thick vapor mentioned in the line preceding. See Lamentations 4:8, and Job 30:30. See this meaning of the word שחר shachar well supported in Christ. Muller. Sat. Observat. Philippians p. 53, Lugd. Bat. 1752. The morning seems to have been an idea wholly incongruous in the passage of Joel; and in this of Isaiah the words in which there is no morning (for so it ought to be rendered if שחר shachar in this place signifies, according to its usual sense, morning) seem to give no meaning at all. "It is because there is no light in them," says our translation. If there be any sense in these words, it is not the sense of the original; which cannot justly be so translated. *Qui n'a rien d'obscur*, "which has no obscurity." - Deschamps. The reading of the Septuagint and Syriac, שחך shochad, gift, affords no assistance towards the clearing up of any of this difficult place. R. D. Kimchi says this was the form of an oath: "By the law and by the testimony such and such things are so." Now if they had sworn this falsely, it is because there is no light, no illumination, שחר shachar, no scruple of conscience, in them.

## **8:21-22. The alternative to trust in God**

### **Verse 21**

**Hardly bestead "Distressed"** - Instead of נקשה niksheh, distressed, the Vulgate, Chaldee, and Symmachus manifestly read כשלן nichshal, stumbling, tottering through weakness, ready to fall; a sense which suits very well with the place.

**And look upward "And he shall cast his eyes upward"** - The learned professor Michaelis, treating of this place (Not. in de Sacr. Poes. Hebr. Prael. ix.) refers to a passage in the Koran which is similar to it. As it is a very celebrated passage, and on many accounts remarkable, I shall give it here at large, with the same author's farther remarks upon it in another place of his writings. It must be noted here that the learned professor renders נִבֵּט, הִבֵּט nibbat, hibbit, in this and the parallel place, Isaiah 5:30, which I translate he looketh by it thundereth, from Schultens, Orig. Ling. Hebr. Lib. 1 cap. 2, of the justness of which rendering I much doubt.

This brings the image of Isaiah more near in one circumstance to that of Mohammed than it appears to be in my translation: -

"Labid, contemporary with Mohammed, the last of the seven Arabian poets who had the honor of having their poems, one of each, hung up in the entrance of the temple of Mecca, struck with the sublimity of a passage in the Koran, became a convert to Mohammedism; for he concluded that no man could write in such a manner unless he were Divinely inspired.

"One must have a curiosity to examine a passage which had so great an effect upon Labid. It is, I must own, the finest that I know in the whole Koran: but I do not think it will have a second time the like effect, so as to tempt any one of my readers to submit to circumcision. It is in the second chapter, where he is speaking of certain apostates from the faith. 'They are like,' saith he, 'to a man who kindles a light. As soon as it begins to shine, God takes from them the light, and leaves them in darkness that they see nothing. They are deaf, dumb, and blind; and return not into the right way. Or they fare as when a cloud, full of darkness, thunder, and lightning, covers the heaven. When it bursteth, they stop their ears with their fingers, with deadly fear; and God hath the unbelievers in his power. The lightning almost robbeth them of their eyes: as often as it flasheth they go on by its light; and when it vanisheth in darkness, they stand still. If God pleased, they would retain neither hearing nor sight.' That the thought is beautiful, no one will deny; and Labid, who had probably a mind to flatter Mohammed, was lucky in finding a passage in the Koran so little abounding in poetical beauties, to which his conversion might with any propriety be ascribed. It was well that he went no farther; otherwise his taste for poetry might have made him again an infidel." Michaelis, Erpenii Arabische Grammatik abgekürzt, Vorrede, s. 32.

## Chapter 9

### Introduction

This chapter contains an illustrious prophecy of the Messiah. He is represented under the glorious figure of the sun, or light, rising on a benighted world, and diffusing joy and gladness wherever he sheds his beams, Isaiah 9:1-3. His conquests are astonishing and miraculous, as in the day of Midian; and the peace which they procure is to be permanent, as denoted by the burning of all the implements of war, Isaiah 9:4, Isaiah 9:5. The person and character of this great Deliverer are then set forth in the most magnificent terms which the language of mankind could furnish, Isaiah 9:6. The extent of his kingdom is declared to be universal, and the duration of it eternal, Isaiah 9:7. The prophet foretells most awful calamities which were ready to fall upon the Israelites on account of their manifold impieties, Isaiah 9:8-21.

### 9:1-2. Prophecy of Immanuel as the great light

#### Verse 1

**Dimness "Accumulated darkness"** - Either מנדחה *menuddechah*, fem. to agree with אפלה *aphelah* ; or אפל המנדח *aphel hammenuddach*, alluding perhaps to the palpable Egyptian darkness, Exodus 10:21.

**The land of Zebulun** - Zebulun, Naphtali, Manasseh, that is, the country of Galilee all round the sea of Gennesareth, were the parts that principally suffered in the first Assyrian invasion under Tiglath-pileser; see 2 Kings 15:29; 1 Chronicles 5:26. And they were the first that enjoyed the blessings of Christ's preaching the Gospel, and exhibiting his miraculous works among them. See Mede's Works, p. 101, and 457. This, which makes the twenty-third verse of chap. 8 in the Hebrew, is the first verse in chap. 9 in our authorized version. Bishop Lowth follows the division in the Hebrew.

### 9:3-5. Prophecy of Immanuel as the great liberator

#### Verse 3

**And not increased the joy "Thou hast increased their joy"** - Eleven MSS. of Kennicott's and six of De Ross's, two ancient, read לו *lo*, it, according to the Masoretical correction, instead of לא *lo*, not. To the same purpose the Targum and Syriac.

**The joy in harvest** - כשמחת בקציר kesimchath bakkatsir . For בקציר bakkatsir one MS. of Kennicott's and one of De Rossi's have קציר katsir, and another הקציר hakkatsir, "the harvest;" one of which seems to be the true, reading, as the noun preceding is *in regimine*.

## Verse 5

**Every battle of the warrior "The greaves of the armed warrior"** - שאון שאון seon soen . This word, occurring only in this place, is of very doubtful signification. Schindler fairly tells us that we may guess at it by the context. The Jews have explained it, by guess I believe, as signifying battle, conflict: the Vulgate renders it *violenta praedatio*. But it seems as if something was rather meant which was capable of becoming fuel for the fire, together with the garments mentioned in the same sentence. In Syriac the word, as a noun, signifies a shoe, or a sandal, as a learned friend suggested to me some years ago. See Luke 15:22; Acts 12:8. I take it, therefore, to mean that part of the armor which covered the legs and feet, and I would render the two words in Latin by *caliga caligati*. The burning of heaps of armor, gathered from the field of battle, as an offering made to the god supposed to be the giver of victory, was a custom that prevailed among some heathen nations; and the Romans used it as an emblem of peace, which perfectly well suits with the design of the prophet in this place. A medal struck by Vespasian on finishing his wars both at home and abroad represents the goddess Peace holding an olive branch in one hand, and, with a lighted torch in the other, setting fire to a heap of armor. Virgil mentions the custom: -

" - *Cum primam aciem Praeneste sub ipsa*

*Stravi, scutorumque incendi victor acervos.*"

*Aen. lib. viii., ver. 561.*

"Would heaven, (said he), my strength and youth recall,

Such as I was beneath Praeneste's wall -

Then when I made the foremost foes retire

And set whole heaps of conquered shields on fire."

*Dryden.*

See Addison on Medals, Series 2:18. And there are notices of some such practice among the Israelites, and other nations of the most early times. God promises to Joshua victory over the kings of Canaan. "To-morrow I will deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire," Joshua 11:6. See also Nahum 2:13. And the psalmist employs this image to express complete victory, and the perfect establishment of peace: -

"He maketh wars to cease, even to the end of the land:

He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder;

And burneth the chariots in the fire.

- *Psalm 46:9.*

עגלות *agaloth*, properly *plausira*, *impedimenta*, the baggage-wagons: which however the Septuagint and Vulgate render *scuta*, "shields;" and the Chaldee, "round shields," to show the propriety of that sense of the word from the etymology; which, if admitted, makes the image the same with that used by the Romans.

Ezekiel, Ezekiel 39:8-10, in his bold manner has carried this image to a degree of amplification which I think hardly any other of the Hebrew poets would have attempted. He describes the burning of the arms of the enemy, in consequence of the complete victory to be obtained by the Israelites over Gog and Magog: -

"Behold, it is come to pass, and it is done,

Saith the Lord Jehovah.

This is the day of which I spoke:

And the inhabitants of the cities of Israel shall go forth.

And shall set on fire the armor, and the shield,

And the buckler, and the bow, and the arrows,

And the clubs and the lances;

And they shall set them on fire for seven years.

And they shall not bear wood from the field;

Neither shall they hew from the forest:  
For of the armor shall they make their fires;  
And they shall spoil their spoilers,  
And they shall plunder their plunderers."

R. D. Kimchi, on this verse says this refers simply to the destruction of the Assyrians. Other battles are fought man against man, and spear against spear; and the garments are rolled in blood through the wounds given and received: but this was with burning, for the angel of the Lord smote them by night, and there was neither sword nor violent commotion, nor blood; they were food for the fire, for the angel of the Lord consumed them.

### **9:6-7. Prophecy of Immanuel as the great Lord**

#### **Verse 6**

**The government shall be upon his shoulder** - That is, the ensign of government; the scepter, the sword, the key, or the like, which was borne upon or hung from the shoulder. See note on Isaiah 22:22.

**And his name shall be called** - אל גבור El gibbor, the prevailing or conquering God.

**The everlasting Father "The Father of the everlasting age"** - Or אבי עד Abi ad, the Father of eternity. The Septuagint have μεγαλης βουλης Αγγελος, "the Messenger of the Great Counsel." But instead of אבי עד Abi ad, a MS. of De Rossi has אבעזר Abezer, the helping Father; evidently the corruption of some Jew, who did not like such an evidence in favor of the Christian Messiah.

**Prince of Peace** - שר שלום sar shalom, the Prince of prosperity, the Giver of all blessings.

A MS. of the thirteenth century in Kennicott's collection has a remarkable addition here. "He shall be a stumbling-block, המכשלה ; the government is on his shoulder." This reading is nowhere else acknowledged, as far as I know.

#### **Verse 7**

**Of the increase** - In the common Hebrew Bibles, and in many MSS., this word is written with the close or final ם למרבה . But in twelve of Kennicott's MSS.,

and twelve of De Rossi's, it is written with the open  $\gamma$  mem ; but here it is supposed to contain mysteries, viz., that Jerusalem shall be shut up, closed, and confined, till the days of the Messiah.

This is an illustrious prophecy of the incarnation of Christ, with an enumeration of those characters in which he stands most nearly related to mankind as their Savior; and of others by which his infinite majesty and Godhead are shown. He shall appear as a child, born of a woman, born as a Jew, under the law, but not in the way of ordinary generation. He is a Son given - the human nature, in which the fullness of the Godhead was to dwell, being produced by the creative energy of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin. See Matthew 1:20, Matthew 1:21, Matthew 1:23, Matthew 1:25, and Luke 1:35, and Isaiah 7:14, and the notes on those passages. As being God manifested in the flesh, he was wonderful in his conception, birth, preaching, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension; wonderful in his person, and wonderful in his working. He is the Counsellor that expounds the law; shows its origin, nature, and claims; instructs, pleads for the guilty; and ever appears in the presence of God for men. He is the mighty God; God essentially and efficiently prevailing against his enemies, and destroying ours. He is the Father of eternity; the Origin of all being, and the Cause of the existence, and particularly the Father, of the spirits of all flesh. The Prince of peace - not only the Author of peace, and the Dispenser of peace, but also he that rules by peace, whose rule tends always to perfection, and produces prosperity. Of the increase of his government - this Prince has a government, for he has all power both in heaven and in earth: and his government increases, and is daily more and more extended, and will continue till all things are put under his feet. His kingdom is ordered - every act of government regulated according to wisdom and goodness; is established so securely as not to be overthrown; and administered in judgment and justice, so as to manifest his wisdom, righteousness, goodness, and truth. Reader, such is that Jesus who came into the world to save sinners! Trust in Him!

### **Isaiah 9:8-10:4. Proud Samaria is doomed (third discourse)**

#### **9:8-10. Israel's pride and presumption**

This whole passage reduced to its proper and entire form, and healed of the dislocation which it suffers by the absurd division of the chapters, makes a distinct prophecy, and a just poem, remarkable for the regularity of its disposition and the elegance of its plan. It has no relation to the preceding or following prophecy; though the parts, violently torn asunder, have been, on the one side and the other, patched on to them. Those relate principally to the kingdom of Judah, this is addressed exclusively to the kingdom of Israel. The



subject of it is a denunciation of vengeance awaiting their crimes. It is divided into four parts, each threatening the particular punishment of some grievous offense - of their pride, of their perseverance in their vices, of their impiety, and of their injustice. To which is added a general denunciation of a farther reserve of Divine wrath, contained in a distich, before used by the prophet on a like occasion, Isaiah 5:25, and here repeated after each part. This makes the intercalary verse of the poem; or, as we call it, the burden of the song.

*"Post hoc comma (cap. Isaiah 9:4;) interponitur spatium unius lineae, in Cod. 2 et 3: idemque observatur in 245. in quo nullum est spatium ad finem capituli 9."* Kennicott, Var. Lect.

"After this clause ( Isaiah 9:4;) is interposed the space of one line in Cod. 2 and 3. The same is likewise observed in Cod. 245, in which no space exists at the end of chap. 9."

## Verse 8

**Lord "Jehovah"** - For אֲדֹנָי Adonai, thirty MSS. of Kennicott's, and many of De Rossi's, and three editions, read יְהוָה Yehovah .

## Verse 9

**Pride and stoutness of heart "Carry themselves haughtily"** - וַיִּדְעוּ veyadeu, "and they shall know;" so ours and the Versions in general. But what is it that they shall know? The verb stands destitute of its object; and the sense is imperfect. The Chaldee is the only one, as far as I can find, that expresses it otherwise. He renders the verb in this place by וַאֲתַרְבְּרִבוּ veithrabrabu, "they exalt themselves, or carry themselves haughtily; the same word by which he renders גַּבְהוּ gabehu, Isaiah 3:16. He seems, therefore, in this place to have read וַיִּגְבְּהוּ vaiyigbehu, which agrees perfectly well with what follows, and clears up the difficulty. Archbishop Secker conjectured וַיִּדְבְּרוּ vayedabberu, referring it to לֵאמֹר lemor, in the next verse, which shows that he was not satisfied with the present reading. Houbigant reads וַיִּרְעוּ vaiyereu, *et pravi facti sunt*, they are become wicked, which is found in a MS.; but I prefer the reading of the Chaldee, which suits much better with the context.

Houbigant approves of this reading; but it is utterly unsupported by any evidence from antiquity: it is a mere mistake of ר resh for ד daleth ; and I am surprised that it should be favored by Houbigant.

## Verse 10

**The bricks** - "The eastern bricks," says Sir John Chardin, (see Harmer's Observ. I., p. 176), "are only clay well moistened with water, and mixed with straw, and dried in the sun." So that their walls are commonly no better than our mud walls; see Maundrell, p. 124. That straw was a necessary part in the composition of this sort of bricks, to make the parts of the clay adhere together, appears from Exodus 5. These bricks are properly opposed to hewn stone, so greatly superior in beauty and durableness. The sycamores, which, as Jerome on the place says, are timber of little worth, with equal propriety are opposed to the cedars. "As the grain and texture of the sycamore is remarkably coarse and spongy, it could therefore stand in no competition at all (as it is observed, Isaiah 9:10;) with the cedar, for beauty and ornament." - Shaw, Supplement to Travels, p. 96. We meet with the same opposition of cedars to sycamores, 1 Kings 10:27, where Solomon is said to have made silver as the stones, and cedars as the sycamores in the vale for abundance. By this mashal, or figurative and sententious speech, they boast that they shall easily be able to repair their present losses, suffered perhaps by the first Assyrian invasion under Tiglath-pileser; and to bring their affairs to a more flourishing condition than ever.

Some of the bricks mentioned above lie before me. They were brought from the site of ancient Babylon. The straw is visible, kneaded with the clay; they are very hard, and evidently were dried in the sun; for they are very easily dissolved in water.

## Verse 11

**The adversaries of Rezin against him "The princes of Retsin against him"** - For צרי tsarey, enemies, Houbigant, by conjecture, reads שרי sarey, princes; which is confirmed by thirty of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., (two ancient), one of my own, ancient; and nine more have צ tsaddi, upon a rasure, and therefore had probably at first שרי sarey . The princes of Retsin, the late ally of Israel, that is, the Syrians, expressly named in the next verse, shall now be excited against Israel.

The Septuagint in this place give us another variation; for רצין Retsin, they read הר ציון har tsiyon, ορος Σιών, Mount Sion, of which this may be the sense; but Jehovah shall set up the adversaries of Mount Sion against him, (i.e., against Israel), and will strengthen his enemies together; the Syrians, the Philistines, who are called the adversaries of Mount Sion. See Simonis Lex. in voce סכך sachach .

## Verse 12

**With open mouth "On every side"** - כִּלְבֵּי פֶה bechol peh, in every corner, in every part of their country, pursuing them to the remotest extremities, and the most retired parts. So the Chaldee בְּכָל אֶתָר bechol athar, in every place.

## Verse 14

**In one day** - Thirteen MSS. of Kennicott and De Rossi read יוֹמֶב beyond in a day; and another has a rasure in the place of the letter ב beth .

## Verse 17

**The Lord "Jehovah"** - For אֲדֹנָי Adonai, a great number of MSS. read יְהוָה Yehovah .

## Verse 18

**For wickedness** - Wickedness rageth like a fire, destroying and laying waste the nation: but it shall be its own destruction, by bringing down the fire of God's wrath, which shall burn up the briers and the thorns; that is, the wicked themselves. Briers and thorns are an image frequently applied in Scripture, when set on fire, to the rage of the wicked; violent, yet impotent, and of no long continuance. "They are extinct as the fire of thorns," Psalm 118:12. To the wicked themselves, as useless and unprofitable, proper objects of God's wrath, to be burned up, or driven away by the wind. "As thorns cut up they shall be consumed in the fire," Isaiah 33:12. Both these ideas seem to be joined in Psalm 58:9; : -

"Before your pots shall feel the thorn,

As well the green as the dry, the tempest shall bear them away."

The green and the dry is a proverbial expression, meaning all sorts of them, good and bad, great and small, etc. So Ezekiel: "Behold, I will kindle a fire, and it shall devour every green tree, and every dry tree," Ezekiel 20:47. D'Herbelot quotes a Persian poet describing a pestilence under the image of a conflagration: "This was a lightning that, falling upon a forest, consumed there the green wood with the dry." See Harmer's Observations, Vol. II., p. 187.

## Verse 20

**The flesh of his own arm "The flesh of his neighbor"** - "Του βραχιονος του αδελφου αυτου, the Septuagint Alexand. *Duplex versio, quarum altera legit* רעו reo, *quae vox extat*, Jeremiah 6:21. *Nam* רע rea, αδελφος, Genesis 43:33. *Recte ni fallor.*" - Secker. I add to this excellent remark, that the Chaldee manifestly reads רעו reo, his neighbor, not זרעו zeroo, his arm; for he renders it by קריביה karibeyh, his neighbor. And Jeremiah has the very same expression: רעהו יאכלו veish besar reehu yochelu, "and every one shall eat the flesh of his neighbor," Jeremiah 19:9. This observation, I think, gives the true reading and sense of this place: and the context strongly confirms it by explaining the general idea by particular instances, in the following verse: "Every man shall devour the flesh of his neighbor;" that is, they shall harass and destroy one another. "Manasseh shall destroy Ephraim, and Ephraim, Manasseh;" which two tribes were most closely connected both in blood and situation as brothers and neighbors; "and both of them in the midst of their own dissensions shall agree in preying upon Judah." The common reading, "shall devour the flesh of his own arm," in connection with what follows, seems to make either an inconsistency, or an anticlimax; whereas by this correction the following verse becomes an elegant illustration of the foregoing. - L.

## Chapter 10

### 10:5-34. The Assyrian invades Immanuel's land (fourth discourse)

#### Introduction

God's judgments against oppressive rulers, Isaiah 10:1-4. The prophet foretells the invasion of Sennacherib, and the destruction of his army. That mighty monarch is represented as a rod in the hand of God to correct his people for their sins; and his ambitious purposes, contrary to his own intentions, are made subservient to the great desires of Providence, Isaiah 10:5-11. Having accomplished this work, the Almighty takes account of his impious vauntings, Isaiah 10:12-14; and threatens utter destruction to the small and great of his army, represented by the thorns, and the glory of the forest, Isaiah 10:15-19. This leads the prophet to comfort his countrymen with the promise of the signal interposition of God in their favor, Isaiah 10:24-27. Brief description of the march of Sennacherib towards Jerusalem, and of the alarm and terror which he spread every where as he hastened forward, Isaiah 10:28-32. The spirit and rapidity of the description is admirably suited to the subject. The affrighted people are seen fleeing, and the eager invader pursuing; the cries of one city are heard by those of another; and groan swiftly succeeds to groan, till at length the

rod is lifted over the last citadel. In this critical situation, however, the promise of a Divine interposition is seasonably renewed. The scene instantly changes; the uplifted arm of this mighty conqueror is at once arrested and laid low by the hand of heaven; the forest of Lebanon, (a figure by which the immense Assyrian host is elegantly pointed out, is hewn down by the axe of the Divine vengeance; and the mind is equally pleased with the equity of the judgment, and the beauty and majesty of the description, Isaiah 10:33, Isaiah 10:34.

## Verse 2

**My people** - Instead of עמי ammi, my people, many MSS., and one of my own, ancient, read עמו ammo, his people. But this is manifestly a corruption.

## Verse 4

**Without me** - That is, without my aid: they shall be taken captive even by the captives, and shall be subdued even by the vanquished. "The י yod in בלתי bilti is a pronoun, as in Hosea 13:4." - Kimchi on the place. One MS. has לבלתי lebilti .

As the people had hitherto lived without God in worship and obedience; so they should now be without his help, and should perish in their transgressions.

**Verses 5-19. Assyria, God's instrument for judging His people, shall in turn be judged**

## Verse 5

**O Assyrian "Ho to the Assyrian"** - Here begins a new and distinct prophecy, continued to the end of the twelfth chapter: and it appears from Isaiah 10:9-11; of this chapter, that this prophecy was delivered after the taking of Samaria by Shalmaneser; which was in the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah: and as the former part of it foretells the invasion of Sennacherib, and the destruction of his army, which makes the whole subject of this chapter it must have been delivered before the fourteenth of the same reign.

**The staff in their hand "The staff in whose hand"** - The word הוא hu, the staff itself, in this place seems to embarrass the sentence. I omit it on the authority of the Alexandrine copy of the Septuagint: nine MSS., (two ancient), and one of my own, ancient, for ומהו umatter hu, read מהו mattehu, his staff. Archbishop Secker was not satisfied with the present reading. He proposes another method of clearing up the sense, by reading ביום beyom, in the day, instead of בידם beyadam, in their hand: "And he is a staff in the day of mine indignation."

## Verse 12

**The Lord "Jehovah"** - For אדני Adonai, fourteen MSS. and three editions read יהוה Yehovah .

**The fruit "The effect"** - פרי peri, f. צבי tsebi, vid. Isaiah 13:19, sed confer, Proverbs 1:31; Proverbs 31:16, Proverbs 31:31." - Secker. The Chaldee renders the word פרי peri by עיבדי obadey, works; which seems to be the true sense; and I have followed it. - L.

## Verse 13

**Like a valiant man "Strongly seated"** - Twelve MSS. agree with the Keri in reading כביר kabbir, without the א aleph . And Sal. ben Melec and Kimchi thus explain it: "them who dwelled in a great and strong place I have brought down to the ground."

## Verse 15

**No wood "Its master"** - I have here given the meaning, without attempting to keep to the expression of the original, לא עץ lo ets, "the no-wood;" that which is not wood like itself, but of a quite different and superior nature. The Hebrews have a peculiar way of joining the negative particle לא lo to a noun, to signify in a strong manner a total negation of the thing expressed by the noun.

"How hast thou given help (ללא כח lelo choach ) to the no-strength?

And saved the arm (לא עז lo oz ) of the no-power?

How hast, thou given counsel (ללא חכמה lelo chochmah ) to the no-wisdom?"

*Job 26:2, Job 26:3.*

That is, to the man totally deprived of strength, power, and wisdom.

"Ye that rejoice (לא דבר lelo dabar ) in nothing."

*Amos 6:13.*

That is, in your fancied strength, which is none at all, a mere nonentity.

"For I am God, (לא איש velo ish ), and no-man;

The Holy One in the midst of thee, yet do not frequent cities."

*Hosea 11:9.*

"And the Assyrian shall fall by a sword (לֹא אִישׁ lo ish ) of no-man;

And a sword of (לֹא אָדָם lo adam ) no-mortal, shall devour him."

*Isaiah 31:8.*

"Wherefore do ye weigh out your silver (בְּלוֹא לֶחֶם belo lechem ) for the no-bread."

*Isaiah 55:2.*

So here לֹא עֵץ lo ets means him who is far from being an inert piece of wood, but is an animated and active being; not an instrument, but an agent.

## Verse 16

**The Lord "Jehovah"** - For אֲדֹנָי Adonai, fifty-two MSS., eleven editions, and two of my own, ancient, read יְהוָה , Jehovah, as in other cases.

**And under his glory** - That is, all that he could boast of as great and strong in his army, (Sal. ben Melec in loc.), expressed afterwards, Isaiah 10:18, by the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field.

## Verse 17

**And it shall burn and devour his thorns "And he shall burn and consume his thorn"** - The briars and thorns are the common people; the glory of his forest are the nobles and those of highest rank and importance. See note on Isaiah 9:17, and compare Ezekiel 20:47. The fire of God's wrath shall destroy them, both great and small; it shall consume them from the soul to the flesh; a proverbial expression; soul and body, as we say; it shall consume them entirely and altogether; and the few that escape shall be looked upon as having escaped from the most imminent danger; "as a firebrand plucked out of the fire," Amos 4:11; ὥς δια πυρός, so as by fire, 1 Corinthians 3:15; as a man when a house is burning is forced to make his escape by running through the midst of the fire.

I follow here the reading of the Septuagint, כִּמְאַשׁ נִסִּים kemash noses, ὥς ὁ φεγγων ἀπὸ φλογος χαιομενης, as he who flees from the burning flame. Symmachus also renders the latter word by φεγγων, flying.

## Verses 20-23. The return of a faithful remnant

### Verse 21

**The remnant shalt return - unto the mighty God** - אל גבור El gibbor, the mighty or conquering God; the Messiah, the same person mentioned in Isaiah 10:6; of the preceding chapter.

### Verse 22

**For though thy people Israel** - I have endeavored to keep to the letter of the text as nearly as I can in this obscure passage; but it is remarkable that neither the Septuagint, nor St. Paul, Romans 9:28, who, except in a few words of no great importance, follows them nearly in this place, nor any one of the ancient Versions, take any notice of the word שֹׁתֵף shoteph, overflowing; which seems to give an idea not easily reconcilable with those with which it is here joined. 1. S. Maerlius (Schol. Philolog. ad Selecta S. Cod. loca) conjectures that the two last letters of this word are by mistake transposed, and that the true reading is שֹׁפֵט shophet, judging, with strict justice. The Septuagint might think this sufficiently expressed by εν δικαιοσυνη, in righteousness. One MS., with St. Paul and Septuagint Alex., omits בו bo in Isaiah 10:22; sixty-nine of Kennicott's and seventeen of De Rossi's MSS. and eight editions, omit כל col, all, in Isaiah 10:23; and so St. Paul, Romans 9:28.

The learned Dr. Bagot, dean of Christ Church, Oxford, afterwards Bishop of Bristol and Norwich, in some observations on this place, which he has been so kind as to communicate to me, and which will appear in their proper light when he himself shall give them to the public, renders the word כִּלְיוֹן kilayon by accomplishment, and makes it refer to the predictions of Moses; the blessing and the curse which he laid before the people, both conditional, and depending on their future conduct. They had by their disobedience incurred those judgments which were now to be fully executed upon them. His translation is, The accomplishment determined overflows with justice; for it is accomplished, and that which is determined the Lord God of hosts doeth in the midst of the land. Some think that the words might be paraphrased thus: The determined destruction of the Jews shall overflow with righteousness, (צִדְקָה tsedakah), justification, the consequence of the Gospel of Christ being preached and believed on in the world. After the destruction of Jerusalem this word or doctrine of the Lord had free course, - did run, and was glorified.



## **Verses 24-34. Therefore Assyria is not to be feared**

### **Verse 24**

**After the manner of Egypt "In the way of Egypt"** - I think there is a designed ambiguity in these words. Sennacherib, soon after his return from his Egyptian expedition, which, I imagine, took him up three years, invested Jerusalem. He is represented by the prophet as lifting up his rod in his march from Egypt, and threatening the people of God, as Pharaoh and the Egyptians had done when they pursued them to the Red Sea. But God in his turn will lift up his rod over the sea, as he did at that time, in the way, or after the manner, of Egypt; and as Sennacherib has imitated the Egyptians in his threats, and came full of rage against them from the same quarter; so God will act over again the same part that he had taken formerly in Egypt, and overthrow their enemies in as signal a manner. It was all to be, both the attack and the deliverance, בדרך bederech, or כדרך kederech, as a MS. has it in each place, in the way, or after the manner, of Egypt.

### **Verse 25**

**The indignation "Mine indignation"** - *Indignatio mea*, Vulg. ἡ οργη, Sept. μου η οργη κατα σου, MS. Pachom. Μου ἡ οργη ἡ κατα σου, MS. 1. D. 2. So that זעמי zaami, or הזעם hazzaam, as one MS. has it, seems to be the true reading.

### **Verse 26**

**And as his rod was upon the sea "And like his rod which he lifted up over the sea"** - The Jewish interpreters suppose here an ellipsis of כ ke, the particle of similitude, before מטהו mattehu, to be supplied from the line above; so that here are two similitudes, one comparing the destruction of the Assyrians to the slaughter of the Midianites at the rock of Oreb; the other to that of the Egyptians at the Red Sea. Aben Ezra, Kimchi, Sal. ben Melec.

### **Verse 27**

**From off thy shoulder** - Bishop Lowth translates the whole verse thus: -

"And it shall come to pass in that day,

His burden shall be removed from off thy shoulder;

And his yoke off thy neck:

Yea, the yoke shall perish from off your shoulders.'

On which he gives us the following note: I follow here the Septuagint, who for מִפְּנֵי שֶׁמֶן mippeney shamen read מִשְׁחִימֵיכֶם mishshichmeychem, ἀπο τῶν ὤμων ὑμῶν, from your shoulders, not being able to make any good sense out of the present reading. I will add here the marginal conjectures of Archbishop Secker, who appears, like all others, to have been at a loss for a probable interpretation of the text as it now stands." o. leg. שָׁכַם shakam ; *forte* legend. מִבְּנֵי שֶׁמֶן mibbeney shamen, *vide* cap. Isaiah 5:1. Zechariah 4:14; : *Et possunt intelligi Judaei uncti Dei*, Psalm 105:15, *vel Assyrii*, מִשְׁמַנִּים mishmannim, *hic* Psalm 105:16, *ut dicat propheta depulsum iri jugum ab his impositum: sed hoc durius. Vel potest legi שְׁמִי מִפְּנֵי שֶׁמֶן mippeney shami* ."

## Verse 28

**He is come to Aiath** - A description of the march of Sennacherib's army approaching Jerusalem in order to invest it, and of the terror and confusion spreading and increasing through the several places as he advanced; expressed with great brevity, but finely diversified. The places here mentioned are all in the neighborhood of Jerusalem; from Ai northward, to Nob westward of it; from which last place he might probably have a prospect of Mount Sion. Anathoth was within three Roman miles of Jerusalem, according to Eusebius, Jerome and Josephus. Onomast. Loc. Hebr. et Antiq. Jud. 10:7, 3. Nob was probably still nearer. And it should seem from this passage of Isaiah that Sennacherib's army was destroyed near the latter of these places. In coming out of Egypt he might perhaps join the rest of his army at Ashdod, after the taking of that place, which happened about that time, (see Isaiah 20:1-6.); and march from thence near the coast by Lachish and Libnah, which lay in his way from south to north, and both which he invested till he came to the north-west of Jerusalem, crossing over to the north of it, perhaps by Joppa and Lydda; or still more north through the plain of Esdraelon.

## Verse 29

**They are gone over the passage "They have passed the strait"** - The strait here mentioned is that of Michmas, a very narrow passage between two sharp hills or rocks, (see 1 Samuel 14:4, 1 Samuel 14:5;), where a great army might have been opposed with advantage by a very inferior force. The author of the Book of Judith might perhaps mean this pass, at least among others: "Charging them to keep the passages of the hill country, for by them there was an entrance into Judea; and it was easy to stop them that would come up, because the passage was strait for two men at the most," Judith 4:7. The enemies having

passed the strait without opposition, shows that all thoughts of making a stand in the open country were given up, and that their only resource was in the strength of the city.

**Their lodging** - The sense seems necessarily to require that we read לָמוֹ lamo, to them, instead of לָנוּ lanu, to us. These two words are in other places mistaken one for the other.

Thus Isaiah 44:7, for לָמוֹ lamo, read לָנוּ lanu, with the Chaldee; and in the same manner Psalm 64:6, with the Syriac, and Psalm 80:7, on the authority of the Septuagint and Syriac, besides the necessity of the sense.

### Verse 30

**Cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anothoth "Hearken unto her, O Laish; answer her, O Anathoth!"** - I follow in this the Syriac Version. The prophet plainly alludes to the name of the place, and with a peculiar propriety, if it had its name from its remarkable echo. "עֲנֹתוֹת anathoth, *responsiones: eadem ratio nominis, quae in בֵּית עֲנַת beith anath, locus echus; nam hodiernum ejus rudera ostenduntur in valle, scil. in medio montium, ut referent Robertus in Itiner. p. 70, et Monconnysius, p. 301.*" Simonis Onomasticon Vet. Test. - L. Anathoth - Answers, replies; for the same reason that Bethany, בֵּית עֲנַת berth anath, had its name, the house of echo; the remains of which are still shown in the valley, i.e., among the mountains.

### Verse 33

**Shall lop the bough with terror** - פֹּרֶה purah ; but פֹּרֶה purah, wine-press, is the reading of twenty-six of Kennicott's and twenty-three of De Rossi's MSS., four ancient editions, with Symmachus, Theodotion, and the Chaldee.

### Verse 34

**Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one** - בְּאֵדִיר beaddir, the angel of the Lord, who smote them, Kimchi. And so Vitranga understands it. Others translate, "The high cedars of Lebanon shall fall:" but the king of Assyria is the person who shall be overthrown.

## **Chapter 11**

### **11. Immanuel-King and His kingdom (fourth discourse)**

#### **Introduction**

The Messiah represented as a slender twig shooting up from the root of an old withered stem, which tender plant, so extremely weak in its first appearance, should nevertheless become fruitful and mighty, Isaiah 11:1-4. Great equity of the Messiah's government, Isaiah 11:5. Beautiful assemblages of images by which the great peace and happiness of his kingdom are set forth, Isaiah 11:6-8. The extent of his dominion shall be ultimately that of the whole habitable globe, Isaiah 11:9. The prophet, borrowing his imagery from the exodus from Egypt, predicts, with great majesty of language, the future restoration of the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah, (viz., the whole of the twelve tribes of Israel), from their several dispersions, and also that blessed period when both Jews and Gentiles shall assemble under the banner of Jesus, and zealously unite in extending the limits of his kingdom, Isaiah 11:10-16.

The prophet had described the destruction of the Assyrian army under the image of a mighty forest, consisting of flourishing trees growing thick together, and of a great height; of Lebanon itself crowned with lofty cedars, but cut down and laid level with the ground by the axe wielded by the hand of some powerful and illustrious agent. In opposition to this image he represents the great Person who makes the subject of this chapter as a slender twig shooting out from the trunk of an old tree, cut down, lopped to the very root, and decayed; which tender plant, so weak in appearance, should nevertheless become fruitful and prosper. This contrast shows plainly the connection between this and the preceding chapter, which is moreover expressed by the connecting particle; and we have here a remarkable instance of that method so common with the prophets, and particularly with Isaiah, of taking occasion, from the mention of some great temporal deliverance, to launch out into the display of the spiritual deliverance of God's people by the Messiah; for that this prophecy relates to the Messiah we have the express authority of St. Paul, Romans 15:12. 'He joins this paragraph, with respect to the days of the Messiah, with the fidelity that was in the days of Hezekiah.' - Kimchi, in Isaiah 11:1. Thus in the latter part of Isaiah's prophecies the subject of the great redemption, and of the glories of the Messiah's kingdom, arises out of the restoration of Judah by the deliverance from the captivity of Babylon, and is all along connected and intermixed with it.

### **Verse 1. Immanuel-King's Davidic descent**

### **Verse 2. Immanuel-King's enduement**

### **Verses 3-5. Immanuel-King's equitable government**

#### **Verse 4**

**With the rod of his mouth "By the blast of his mouth"** - For בשבט beshebet, by the rod, Houbigant reads בשבת beshebeth, by the blast of his mouth, from נשב nashab, to blow. The conjecture is ingenious and probable; and seems to be confirmed by the Septuagint and Chaldee, who render it by the word of his mouth, which answers much better to the correction than to the present reading. Add to this, that the blast of his mouth is perfectly parallel to the breath of his lips in the next line.

#### **Verse 5**

**The girdle "The cincture"** - All the ancient Versions, except that of Symmachus, have two different words for girdle in the two hemistichs. It is not probable that Isaiah would have repeated אזור azer, when a synonymous word so obvious as חגור chagor occurred. The tautology seems to have arisen from the mistake of some transcriber. The meaning of this verse is, that a zeal for justice and truth shall make him active and strong in executing the great work which he shall undertake. See note on Isaiah 5:27.

### **Verses 6-9. Immanuel-King's peaceful kingdom**

#### **Verse 6**

**The wolf also shall, etc. "Then shall the wolf," etc.** - The idea of the renewal of the golden age, as it is called, is much the same in the Oriental writers with that of the Greeks and Romans: - the wild beasts grow tame; serpents and poisonous herbs become harmless; all is peace and harmony, plenty and happiness: -

*Occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni Occidet.*

*Vega. Eclog. 4:24.*

"The serpent's brood shall die. The sacred ground

Shall weeds and noxious plants refuse to bear."

- *Nec magnos metuent armenta leones.*

*Virg. Eclog. 4:22.*

"Nor shall the flocks fear the great lions."

*Non lupus insidias explorat ovilia circum,*

*Nec gregibus nocturnus obambulat: acrior illum*

*Cura domat: timidae damae cervique fugaces*

*Nunc interque canes, et circum tecta vagantur.*

*Virg. Georg. 3:537.*

"The nightly wolf that round the enclosure prowled,

To leap the fence, now plots not on the fold:

Tamed with a sharper pain, the fearful doe

And flying stag amidst the greyhounds go;

And round the dwellings roam, of man, their former foe."

*Dryden.*

*Nec vespertinus circumgemit ursus ovile,*

*Nec intumescit alta viperis humus.*

*Hor. Epod. 16:51.*

"Nor evening bears the sheepfold growl around,

Nor mining vipers heave the tainted ground."

*Dryden.*

Εσται δη τουτ ' αμαρ, όπηγνικα νεβρον εν ευναπ

Καρχαροδων δινεσθαι ιδων λυκος ουκ εθελησει.

*Theoc. Idyl. 24:84.*

There shall be a time when the ravenous wolf shall see the kid lying at ease, and shall feel no desire to do it an injury.

I have laid before the reader these common passages from the most elegant of the ancient poets, that he may see how greatly the prophet on the same subject has the advantage upon the comparison; how much the former fall short of that beauty and elegance, and variety of imagery, with which Isaiah has set forth the very same ideas. The wolf and the leopard not only forbear to destroy the lamb and the kid, but even take their abode and lie down together with them. The calf, and the young lion, and the fatling, not only come together, but are led quietly in the same band, and that by a little child. The heifer and the she-bear not only feed together, but even lodge their young ones, for whom they used to be most jealously fearful, in the same place. All the serpent kind is so perfectly harmless, that the sucking infant and the newly weaned child puts his hand on the basilisk's den, and plays upon the hole of the aspic. The lion not only abstains from preying on the weaker animals, but becomes tame and domestic, and feeds on straw like the ox. These are all beautiful circumstances, not one of which has been touched upon by the ancient poets. The Arabian and Persian poets elegantly apply the same ideas to show the effects of justice impartially administered, and firmly supported, by a great and good king: -

"Mahmoud the powerful king, the ruler of the world,

To whose tank the wolf and the lamb come, together to drink."

*Ferdusi.*

"Through the influence of righteousness, the hungry wolf

Becomes mild, though in the presence of the white kid."

*Ibn Onein. Jones, Poes. Asiat. Comment., p. 380.*

The application is extremely ingenious and beautiful: but the exquisite imagery of Isaiah is not equalled.

## **Verse 7**

In this verse a word is omitted in the text, יחדו *yachdav*, together; which ought to be repeated in the second hemistich, being quite necessary to the sense. It is accordingly twice expressed by the Septuagint and Syriac.

## Verse 8

**The cockatrice' den** - This is supposed, both by the Targum and by Kimchi, to mean the pupil of this serpent's eye. "When," says Kimchi, "he is in the mouth of his den, in an obscure place, then his eyes sparkle exceedingly: the child, seeing this, and supposing it to be a piece of crystal, or precious stone, puts forth his hand to take it. What would be very dangerous at another time, shall be safe in the days of the Messiah; for the serpent will not hurt the child."

## Verse 10. Immanuel-King will bring the Gentiles into the kingdom

### Verse 10

**A root of Jesse, which shall stand etc. "The root of Jesse, which standeth," etc.** - St. John hath taken this expression from Isaiah, Revelation 5:5, and Revelation 22:16, where Christ hath twice applied it to himself. Seven MSS. have עומד omed, standing, the present participle. *Radix Isaei dicitur jam stare, et aliquantum stetisse, in signum populorum.* - Vitringa. "The root of Jesse is said to stand, and for some time to have stood, for an ensign to the people." Which rightly explains either of the two readings. Psalm 110:1-7; (note) is a good comment on this verse.

## Verses 11-16. Immanuel-King will regather the Jews

### Verse 11

**And it shall come to pass in that day** - This part of the chapter contains a prophecy which certainly remains yet to be accomplished.

**The Lord "Jehovah"** - For אדני Adonai, thirty-three MSS. of Kennicott's, and many of De Rossi's, and two editions, read יהוה Yehovah .

**The islands of the sea** - The Roman and Turkish empires, say Kimchi.

### Verse 13

**The adversaries of Judah "And the enmity of Judah"** - צררים tsorerim, *Postulat pars posterior versus, ut intelligantur inimicitiae Judae in Ephraimum: et potest* (צררים tsorerim ) *inimicitiam notare, ut* (נחומים nichumim ) *poenitentiam,* Hosea 11:8. - Secker.



## Verse 15

**The Lord - shall smite it in the seven streams "Smite with a drought"** - The Chaldee reads הֶחֱרִיב hecherib ; and so perhaps the Septuagint, who have ἐρημῶσαι, the word by which they commonly render it. Vulg. *desolabit*; "shall desolate." The Septuagint, Vulgate, and Chaldee read הִדְרִיכָהּ hidrichahu, "shall make it passable," adding the pronoun, which is necessary: but this reading is not confirmed by any MS.

Here is a plain allusion to the passage of the Red Sea. And the Lord's shaking his hand over the river with his vehement wind, refers to a particular circumstance of the same miracle: for "he caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land," Exodus 14:21. The tongue; a very apposite and descriptive expression for a bay such as that of the Red Sea. It is used in the same sense, Joshua 15:2, Joshua 15:5; Joshua 18:19. The Latins gave the same name to a narrow strip of land running into the sea: *tenuem producit in aequora linguam*. Lucan. 2:613. He shall smite the river to its seven streams. This has been supposed to refer to the Nile, because it falls into the Mediterranean Sea by seven mouths: but R. Kimchi understands it of the Euphrates, which is the opinion of some good judges. See the Targum. See below.

Herodotus, lib. i, 189, tells a story of his Cyrus, (a very different character from that of the Cyrus of the Scriptures and Xenophon), which may somewhat illustrate this passage, in which it is said that God would inflict a kind of punishment and judgment on the Euphrates, and render it fordable by dividing it into seven streams. "Cyrus, being impeded in his march to Babylon by the Gyndes, a deep and rapid river which falls into the Tigris, and having lost one of his sacred white horses that attempted to pass it, was so enraged against the river that he threatened to reduce it, and make it so shallow that it should be easily fordable even by women, who should not be up to their knees in passing it. Accordingly he set his whole army to work, and cutting three hundred and sixty trenches, from both sides of the river, turned the waters into them, and drained them off."



*Relief of a dying lioness, from the palace of Ashurbanipal, Nineveh*  
**Archaeological light**

*From the records of Ashurbanipal, British Museum translation*

By the time king Ashurbanipal began his rule in 645 BCE, the neo-Assyrian Empire was on its last legs. Originally a tiny landlocked kingdom in northern Mesopotamia (now Iraq), Assyria expanded to become the greatest empire up to that time. In the space of 300 years starting in 934 BCE, its boundaries grew to encompass modern-day Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and much of Egypt, Turkey and Iran. Apart from the odd reference in the *Bible* (Calhu, for instance, is Assyrian Nimrud), nothing much was known about neo-Assyria until British archeologist Austen Henry Layard began digging near the Iraqi city of Mosul in 1845, leading to the discovery of the great cities of Nimrud and Nineveh.

Ashurbanipal's North Palace in Nineveh was found and excavated in 1852-54 by Layard's assistant, Hormuzd Rassam, who followed Layard's example by having his best discoveries shipped to the British Museum. That's where you can see what are generally considered to be the finest reliefs, not just of their time, but perhaps of all time: the series comprising the Royal Lion Hunt of Ashurbanipal.

The now-extinct Mesopotamian lion -- considerably smaller than its African cousin -- was once a plague on the human and domestic animal population of Assyria, and a monument from 3000 BCE shows a ruler dutifully protecting

his people by killing lions. By the time of Ashurbanipal (685-627 BCE), however, it seems only royalty were allowed to slay them. Perhaps by then lions were rare, although, as indicated by the quote above, a series of good years with ample rain may have boosted their numbers. The king dispatched them ritually and publicly, similar, I suppose, to today's stylized bullfights. In one scene, we see lions being released, one by one, from their cage into an arena, so the word "hunt" is somewhat of a misnomer. Many reliefs from that time show the king either shooting arrows at the doomed animals from his chariot or impaling them on his spear.

One entire corridor in Ashurbanipal's Northern Palace, built around 645-635 BCE, was given over to large-scale lion-hunt scenes carved in alabaster bas-relief. Unlike many formalized depictions of animal hunting and sacrifice of that time, what gives these representations their vividness is their realism. I can't imagine any viewer looking at these animals in their agonized death-throes and not being moved to pity.

Within 20 years of the death of Ashurbanipal, the Assyrian empire had virtually disappeared, victim of an internal power struggle between at least three contenders. The final blow came at the battle of Carcamesh, when the king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated the remnants of the Assyrian army and their Egyptian allies.

*If you're in London, don't miss the Royal Lion Hunt reliefs. You'll re-experience the naturalistic compassion depicted 2,600 years ago by Ashurbanipal's sensitive sculptor.*

## **Chapter 12**

### **12. The remnant's song of redemption (fourth discourse)**

#### **Introduction**

Prophetic hymn of praise for the great mercies vouchsafed to the children of Israel in their deliverance from the great Babylonish captivity, and for redemption by the Messiah, Isaiah 12:1-6.

This hymn seems, by its whole tenor, and by many expressions in it, much better calculated for the use of the Christian Church than for the Jewish, in any circumstances, or at any time that can be assigned. The Jews themselves seem to have applied it to the times of Messiah. On the last day of the feast of tabernacles they fetched water in a golden pitcher from the fountain of Shiloah,

springing at the foot of Mount Sion without the city: they brought it through the water-gate into the temple, and poured it, mixed with wine, on the sacrifice as it lay upon the altar, with great rejoicing. They seem to have taken up this custom, for it is not ordained in the law of Moses, as an emblem of future blessings, in allusion to this passage of Isaiah, "Ye shall draw waters with joy from the fountains of salvation," expressions that can hardly be understood of any benefits afforded by the Mosaic dispensation. Our Savior applied the ceremony, and the intention of it, to himself, and the effusion of the Holy Spirit, promised, and to be given, by him. The sense of the Jews in this matter is plainly shown by the following passage of the Jerusalem Talmud: "Why is it called the place or house of drawing?" (for that was the term for this ceremony, or for the place where the water was taken up) "Because from thence they draw the Holy Spirit; as it is written, And ye shall draw water with joy from the fountains of salvation." See Wolf. Curae Philol. in N.T. on John 7:37, John 7:39. - L. The water is Divine knowledge, says Kimchi, and the wells the teachers of righteousness. The Targum renders this in a very remarkable manner: "Ye shall receive with joy (אולפן חדאת) ulephan chadath ) a new doctrine from the chosen among the righteous." Does not this mean the Gospel, the new covenant? And did not the Targumist speak as a prophet?

### **Verses 1-3. The believer's song of redemption**

#### **Verse 1**

**Though thou wast angry "For though thou hast been angry"** - The Hebrew phrase, to which the Septuagint and Vulgate have too closely adhered, is exactly the same with that of St. Paul, Romans 6:17; : "But thanks be to God, that ye were the slaves of sin; but have obeyed from the heart;" that is, "that whereas, or though, ye were the slaves of sin, yet ye have now obeyed from the heart the doctrine on the model of which ye were formed."

#### **Verse 2**

**The Lord Jehovah** - The word יה Yah read here is probably a mistake; and arose originally from the custom of the Jewish scribes, who, when they found a line too short for the word, wrote as many letters as filled it, and then began the next line with the whole word. In writing the word יהוה Jehovah, the line might terminate with יה Yah, the two first letters; and then at the beginning of the next line the whole word יהוה Yehovah would be written. This might give rise to יהוה יה Yah Yehovah . The Yah is wanting here in two of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., in one ancient MS. of my own, and in the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, and Arabic. See Houbigant and De Rossi.

**My song** - The pronoun is here necessary; and it is added by the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Syriac, who read זמרתִי zimrathi, as it is in a MS. Two MSS. omit יה־Yah, see Houbigant, not. in loc. Another MS. has it in one word, זמרתִיה zimrathyah . Seven others omit יהוה Yehovah . See Exodus 15:2, with Var. Lect. Kennicott.

## **Verses 4-6. The remnant's united song of redemption**

### **Verse 4**

**Call upon his name** - קראו בשמו kiru bishmo, invoke his name. Make him your Mediator, or call the people in his name. Preach him who is the Root of Jesse, and who stands as an ensign for the nations. Call on the people to believe in him; as in him alone salvation is to be found.

### **Verse 6**

**Thou inhabitant of Zion** - Not only the Jewish people, to whom his word of salvation was to be sent first; but also all members of the Church of Christ: as in them, and in his Church, the Holy One of Israel dwells. St. Paul, speaking of the mystery which had been proclaimed among the Gentiles, sums it up in these words: " which is Christ in You, the hope of glory; whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus;" Colossians 1:27, Colossians 1:28. Well, therefore, may the inhabitant of Zion cry out and shout, and proclaim the greatness of her Redeemer.

## **Volume III. God's oracles of judgment upon the nations, 13:1-23:18**

### **Chapter 13**

#### **13. The judgment of Babylon**

#### **Introduction**

God mustereth the armies of his wrath against the inhabitants of Babylon, Isaiah 13:1-6. The dreadful consequences of this visitation, and the terror and dismay of those who are the objects of it, Isaiah 13:7-16. The horrid cruelties that shall be indicted upon the Babylonians by the Medes, Isaiah 13:17, Isaiah 13:18. Total and irrecoverable desolation of Babylon, Isaiah 13:19-22.

This and the following chapter, - striking off the five last verses of the latter, which belong to a quite different subject, - contain one entire prophecy,

foretelling the destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians; delivered probably in the reign of Ahaz, (see Vitriya, 1:380), about two hundred years before its accomplishment. The captivity itself of the Jews at Babylon, which the prophet does not expressly foretell, but supposes, in the spirit of prophecy, as what was actually to be effected, did not fully take place till about one hundred and thirty years after the delivery of this prophecy: and the Medes, who are expressly mentioned Isaiah 13:17, as the principal agents in the overthrow of the Babylonian monarchy, by which the Jews were released from that captivity, were at this time an inconsiderable people; having been in a state of anarchy ever since the fall of the great Assyrian empire, of which they had made a part, under Sardanapalus; and did not become a kingdom under Deioces till about the seventeenth of Hezekiah.

The former part of this prophecy is one of the most beautiful examples that can be given of elegance of composition, variety of imagery, and sublimity of sentiment and diction, in the prophetic style; and the latter part consists of an ode of supreme and singular excellence.

The prophecy opens with the command of God to gather together the forces which he had destined to this service, Isaiah 13:2, Isaiah 13:3. Upon which the prophet immediately hears the tumultuous noise of the different nations crowding together to his standard; he sees them advancing, prepared to execute the Divine wrath, Isaiah 13:4, Isaiah 13:5. He proceeds to describe the dreadful consequences of this visitation, the consternation which will seize those who are the objects of it; and, transferring unawares the speech from himself to God, Isaiah 13:11, sets forth, under a variety of the most striking images, the dreadful destruction of the inhabitants of Babylon which will follow, Isaiah 13:11-16, and the everlasting desolation to which that great city is doomed, Isaiah 13:17-22.

The deliverance of Judah from captivity, the immediate consequence of this great revolution, is then set forth, without being much enlarged upon, or greatly amplified, Isaiah 14:1, Isaiah 14:2. This introduces, with the greatest ease and the utmost propriety, the triumphant song on that subject, verses 4-28. The beauties of which, the various images, scenes, persons introduced, and the elegant transitions from one to another, I shall here endeavor to point out in their order, leaving a few remarks upon particular passages of these two chapters to be given after these general observations on the whole.

A chorus of Jews is introduced, expressing their surprise and astonishment at the sudden downfall of Babylon; and the great reverse of fortune that had befallen the tyrant, who, like his predecessors, had oppressed his own and harassed the



neighboring kingdoms. These oppressed kingdoms, or their rulers, are represented under the image of the fir trees and the cedars of Libanus, frequently used to express any thing in the political or religious world that is supereminently great and majestic: the whole earth shouteth for joy; the cedars of Libanus utter a severe taunt over the fallen tyrant, and boast their security now he is no more.

The scene is immediately changed, and a new set of persons is introduced. The regions of the dead are laid open, and Hades is represented as rousing up the shades of the departed monarchs: they rise from their thrones to meet the king of Babylon at his coming; and insult him on his being reduced to the same low estate of impotence and dissolution with themselves. This is one of the boldest prosopopoeias that ever was attempted in poetry; and is executed with astonishing brevity and perspicuity, and with that peculiar force which in a great subject naturally results from both. The image of the state of the dead, or the *infernium poeticum* of the Hebrews, is taken from their custom of burying, those at least of the higher rank, in large sepulchral vaults hewn in the rock. Of this kind of sepulchres there are remains at Jerusalem now extant; and some that are said to be the sepulchres of the kings of Judah. See Maundrell, p. 76. You are to form to yourself an idea of an immense subterranean vault, a vast gloomy cavern, all round the sides of which there are cells to receive the dead bodies; here the deceased monarchs lie in a distinguished sort of state, suitable to their former rank, each on his own couch, with his arms beside him, his sword at his head, and the bodies of his chiefs and companions round about him. See Ezekiel 32:27. On which place Sir John Chardin's MS. note is as follows: "*En Mingrelie ils dorment tous leurs epees sous leurs tetes, et leurs autres armes a leur cote; et on les enterre de mesme, leurs armes poseess de cette facon.*" In Mingrelia they always sleep with their swords under their heads, and their other arms by their sides; and they bury their dead with their arms placed in the same manner. These illustrious shades rise at once from their couches, as from their thrones; and advance to the entrance of the cavern to meet the king of Babylon, and to receive him with insults on his fall.

The Jews now resume the speech; they address the king of Babylon as the morning-star fallen from heaven, as the first in splendor and dignity in the political world, fallen from his high state; they introduce him as uttering the most extravagant vaunts of his power and ambitious designs in his former glory. These are strongly contrasted in the close with his present low and abject condition.

Immediately follows a different scene, and a most happy image, to diversify the same subject, to give it a new turn, and an additional force. Certain persons are

introduced who light upon the corpse of the king of Babylon, cast out and lying naked on the bare ground, among the common slain, just after the taking of the city; covered with wounds, and so disfigured, that it is some time before they know him. They accost him with the severest taunts; and bitterly reproach him with his destructive ambition, and his cruel usage of the conquered; which have deservedly brought him this ignominious treatment, so different from that which those of his rank usually meet with, and which shall cover his posterity with disgrace.

To complete the whole, God is introduced, declaring the fate of Babylon, the utter extirpation of the royal family, and the total desolation of the city; the deliverance of his people, and the destruction of their enemies; confirming the irreversible decree by the awful sanction of his oath.

I believe it may with truth be affirmed, that there is no poem of its kind extant in any language, in which the subject is so well laid out, and so happily conducted, with such a richness of invention, with such variety of images, persons, and distinct actions, with such rapidity and ease of transition, in so small a compass, as in this ode of Isaiah. For beauty of disposition, strength of colouring, greatness of sentiment, brevity, perspicuity, and force of expression, it stands, among all the monuments of antiquity, unrivalled. - L.

## **Verses 1-16. The confusion of the nations preparatory**

### **Verse 1**

**The burden of Babylon** - The prophecy that foretells its destruction by the Medes and Persians: see the preceding observations.

### **Verse 2**

**Exalt the voice** - The word להם lahem, "to them," which is of no use, and rather weakens the sentence, is omitted by an ancient MS., and the Vulgate.

### **Verse 3**

**I have commanded my sanctified ones** - מקדשי mekuddashai, the persons consecrated to this very purpose. Nothing can be plainer than that the verb כדש kadash, "to make holy," signifies also to consecrate or appoint to a particular purpose. Bishop Lowth translates, "my enrolled warriors." This is the sense.



#### Verse 4

**Of the battle "For the battle"** - The Bodleian MS. has למלחמה lemilchamah . Cyrus's army was made up of many different nations. Jeremiah calls it an "assembly of great nations from the north country," Jeremiah 50:9. And afterwards mentions the kingdoms of "Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz, (i.e. Armenia, Corduene, Pontus or Phrygia, Vitring.), with the kings of the Medes," Jeremiah 51:27, Jeremiah 51:28. See Xenophon. Cyrop.

#### Verse 5

**They come from a far country** - The word מארץ meerets is wanting in one MS. and in the Syriac: "They come from afar."

**From the end of heaven** - Kimchi says, Media, "the end of heaven," in Scripture phrase, means, the East.

#### Verse 8

**And they shall be afraid "And they shall be terrified"** - I join this verb, ונבהלו venibhalu, to the preceding verse, with the Syriac and Vulgate.

**Pangs and sorrows shall take hold on them "Pangs shall seize them"** - The Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee read יאחזום yochesum, instead of יאחזון yochesun, which does not express the pronoun then, necessary to the sense.

#### Verse 10

**For the stars of heaven "Yea, the stars of heaven"** - The Hebrew poets, to express happiness, prosperity, the instauration and advancement of states, kingdoms, and potentates, make use of images taken from the most striking parts of nature, from the heavenly bodies, from the sun, moon, and stars: which they describe as shining with increased splendor, and never setting. The moon becomes like the meridian sun, and the sun's light is augmented sevenfold; (see Isaiah 30:26;); new heavens and a new earth are created, and a brighter age commences. On the contrary, the overflow and destruction of kingdoms is represented by opposite images. The stars are obscured, the moon withdraws her light, and the sun shines no more! The earth quakes, and the heavens tremble; and all things seem tending to their original chaos, See Joel 2:10; Joel 3:15, Joel 3:16; Amos 8:9; Matthew 24:29; and De S. Poes. Herb. Prael. 6 et IX.

**And the moon shall not cause her light to shine** - This in its farther reference may belong to the Jewish polity, both in Church and state, which should be totally eclipsed, and perhaps shine no more in its distinct state for ever.

### Verse 11

**I will punish the world "I will visit the world"** - That is, the Babylonish empire; as *η οικουμενη*, for the Roman empire, or for Judea, Luke 2:1; Acts 11:28. So the *universus orbis Romanus*, for the Roman empire; Salvian. lib. 5 Minos calls Crete his world: "*Creten, quae meus est orbis*," Ovid. Metamorph. 8:9.

### Verse 12

**I will make a man more precious than fine gold-wedge of Ophir** - The Medes and Persians will not be satisfied with the spoils of the Babylonians. They seek either to destroy or enslave them; and they will accept no ransom for any man - either for *עֲנוֹשׁ* enosh, the poor man, or for *אָדָם* adam, the more honorable person. All must fall by the sword, or go into captivity together; for the Medes, ( Isaiah 13:17), regard not silver, and delight not in gold.

### Verse 14

**"And the remnant"** - Here is plainly a defect in this sentence, as it stands in the Hebrew text; the subject of the proposition is lost. What is it that shall be like a roe chased? The Septuagint happily supply it, *οἱ καταλελειμμενοι*, *שְׂרָא* shear, the remnant. A MS. here supplies the word *יֹשֵׁב* yosheb, the inhabitant; which makes a tolerably good sense; but I much prefer the reading of the Septuagint.

**They shall - turn "They shall look"** - That is, the forces of the king of Babylon, destitute of their leader, and all his auxiliaries, collected from Asia Minor, and other distant countries, shall disperse and flee to their respective homes.

### Verse 15

**Every one that is found "Every one that is overtaken"** - That is, none shall escape from the slaughter; neither they who flee singly, dispersed and in confusion; nor they who endeavor to make their retreat in a more regular manner, by forming compact bodies: they shall all be equally cut off by the sword of the enemy. The Septuagint have understood it in this sense, which they have well expressed: -

Ὅς γὰρ ἀν ἄλῳ ἡττηθῆσεται, π

Καὶ οἵτινες συνηγμένοι εἰσι πεσούνται μαχαίρᾳ.

"Whosoever is caught shall be overthrown,

And all that are collected together shall fall by the sword."

Where, for ἡττηθῆσεται, MS. Pachom has ἐκκενθῆσεται, et οἱ Γ Cod. Marchal. in margine, et MS. 1. D. 2: ἐκκεντηθῆσεται, which seems to be right, being properly expressive of the Hebrew.

### **Verses 17-22. Prophecy of Babylon's destruction in Isaiah's day**

#### **Verse 17**

**Which shall not regard silver "Who shall hold silver of no account"** - That is, who shall not be induced, by large offers of gold and silver for ransom, to spare the lives of those whom they have subdued in battle; their rage and cruelty will get the better of all such motives. We have many examples in the Iliad and in the Aeneid of addresses of the vanquished to the pity and avarice of the vanquishers, to induce them to spare their lives.

*Est domus alta: jacent penitus defossa talenta*

*Caelati argenti: sunt auri ponders facti*

*Infectique mihi: non hic victoria Teucrum*

*Vertitur; aut anima una dalbit discrimina tanta.*

*Dixerat: Aeneas contra cui talia reddit:*

*Argenti atque auri memoras quae multa talenta*

*Gnatis parce tuis.*

*Aen. 10:526.*

"High in my dome are silver talents rolled,

With piles of labored and unlaboured gold.

These, to procure my ransom, I resign;

The war depends not on a life like mine:  
One, one poor life can no such difference yield,  
Nor turn the mighty balance of the field.  
Thy talents, (cried the prince), thy treasured store  
Keep for thy sons."

*Pitt.*

It is remarkable that Xenophon makes Cyrus open a speech to his army, and in particular to the Medes, who made the principal part of it, with praising them for their disregard of riches. Ἄνδρες Μηδοί, καὶ πάντες οἱ παρόντες, ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς οἶδα σαφῶς, ὅτι οὐτε χρημάτων δεόμενοι σὺν ἐμοὶ ἐξέλθετε· "Ye Medes, and others who now hear me, I well know that you have not accompanied me in this expedition with a view of acquiring wealth." - Cyrop. lib. v.

## Verse 18

**Their bows also shall dash "Their bows shall dash"** - Both Herodotus, 1:61, and Xenophon, Anab. iii., mention, that the Persians used large bows τοξά μεγάλα : and the latter says particularly that their bows were three cubits long, Anab. 4. They were celebrated for their archers, see Isaiah 22:6; Jeremiah 49:35. Probably their neighbours and allies, the Medes, dealt much in the same sort of arms. In Psalm 18:34, and Job 20:24, mention is made of a bow of steel; if the Persian bows were of metal, we may easily conceive that with a metalline bow of three cubits' length, and proportionably strong, the soldiers might dash and slay the young men, the weaker and unresisting of the inhabitants (for they are joined with the fruit of the womb and the children) in the general carnage on taking the city. תרתשנה terattashnah, shall be broken or shivered to pieces. This seems to refer, not to נערים nearim, young men, but to קשתות keshathoth, their bows. The bows of the young men shall be broken to pieces.

**On the fruit, etc. "And on the fruit," etc.** - A MS. of Dr. Kennicott's reads פרי ועל veal peri and on the fruit. And nine MSS. (three ancient) and two editions, with the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Syriac, add likewise the conjunction וּ vau, and, to על al, upon, afterwards.

## Verse 19

**And Babylon** - The great city of Babylon was at this time rising to its height of glory, while the Prophet Isaiah was repeatedly denouncing its utter destruction. From the first of Hezekiah to the first of Nebuchadnezzar, under whom it was brought to the highest degree of strength and splendor, are about one hundred and twenty years. I will here very briefly mention some particulars of the greatness of the place, and note the several steps by which this remarkable prophecy was at length accomplished in the total ruin of it.

It was, according to the lowest account given of it by ancient historians, a regular square, forty-five miles in compass, inclosed by a wall two hundred feet high and fifty broad; in which there were a hundred gates of brass. Its principal ornaments were the temple of Belus, in the middle of which was a tower of eight stories of building, upon a base of a quarter of a mile square, a most magnificent palace, and the famous hanging gardens, which were an artificial mountain, raised upon arches, and planted with trees of the largest as well as the most beautiful sorts.

Cyrus took the city by diverting the waters of the Euphrates which ran through the midst of it, and entering the place at night by the dry channel. The river being never restored afterward to its proper course, overflowed the whole country, and made it little better than a great morass; this and the great slaughter of the inhabitants, with other bad consequences of the taking of the city, was the first step to the ruin of the place. The Persian monarchs ever regarded it with a jealous eye; they kept it under, and took care to prevent its recovering its former greatness. Darius Hystaspes not long afterward most severely punished it for a revolt, greatly depopulated the place, lowered the walls, and demolished the gates. Xerxes destroyed the temples, and with the rest the great temple of Belus, Herod. 3:159, Arrian Exp. Alexandri, lib. 7. The building of Seleucia on the Tigris exhausted Babylon by its neighborhood, as well as by the immediate loss of inhabitants taken away by Seleucus to people his new city, Strabo, lib. 16. A king of the Parthians soon after carried away into slavery a great number of the inhabitants, and burned and destroyed the most beautiful parts of the city, Valesii Excerpt. Diodori, p. 377. Strabo (ibid.) says that in his time great part of it was a mere desert; that the Persians had partly destroyed it; and that time and the neglect of the Macedonians, while they were masters of it, had nearly completed its destruction. Jerome (in loc.) says that in his time it was quite in ruins, and that the walls served only for the inclosure for a park or forest for the king's hunting. Modern travelers, who have endeavored to find the remains of it, have given but a very unsatisfactory account of their success. What Benjamin of Tudela and Pietro della Valle supposed to have been some of its ruins, Tavernier

thinks are the remains of some late Arabian building. Upon the whole, Babylon is so utterly annihilated, that even the place where this wonder of the world stood cannot now be determined with any certainty! See also note on Isaiah 43:14; (note).

We are astonished at the accounts which ancient historians of the best credit give of the immense extent, height, and thickness of the walls of Nineveh and Babylon; nor are we less astonished when we are assured, by the concurrent testimony of modern travelers, that no remains, not the least traces, of these prodigious works are now to be found. Scattered fragments of its tiles and bricks are yet to be found. Proud Babylon reduced now to a few brick-bats! Our wonder will, I think, be moderated in both respects, if we consider the fabric of these celebrated walls, and the nature of the materials of which they consisted. Buildings in the east have always been, and are to this day, made of earth or clay, mixed or beat up with straw to make the parts cohere, and dried only in the sun. This is their method of making bricks; see on Isaiah 9:9; (note). The walls of the city were built of the earth digged out on the spot, and dried upon the place, by which means both the ditch and the wall were at once formed, the former furnishing materials for the latter. That the walls of Babylon were of this kind is well known; and Berosus expressly says, (apud Joseph. Antiq. 10:11), that Nebuchadnezzar added three new walls both to the old and new city, partly of brick and bitumen, and partly of brick alone. A wall of this sort must have a great thickness in proportion to its height, otherwise it cannot stand. The thickness of the walls of Babylon is said to have been one-fourth of their height, which seems to have been no more than was absolutely necessary. Maundrell, speaking of the garden walls of Damascus, says, "They are of a very singular structure. They are built of great pieces of earth, made in the fashion of brick, and hardened in the sun. In their dimensions they are two yards long each, and somewhat more than one broad, and half a yard thick." And afterward, speaking of the walls of the houses, he says, "From this dirty way of building they have this amongst other inconveniences, that upon any violent rain the whole city becomes, by the washing of the houses, as it were a quagmire," p. 124. And see note on Isaiah 30:13. When a wall of this sort comes to be out of repair, and is neglected, it is easy to conceive the necessary consequences, namely, that in no long course of ages it must be totally destroyed by the heavy rains, and at length washed away, and reduced to its original earth. - L.

## **Verse 21**

**Satyrs** - A kind of beast like to man, which is called מרמוטש marmots, a monkey. - Rabbi Parchon.

## Verse 22

**In their pleasant palaces "In their palaces"** - בֵּאלְמִנּוֹתָיו bealmenothaiv ; a plain mistake, I presume, for בְּאַרְמִנּוֹתָיו bearmenothaiv . It is so corrected in two MSS., the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

Πουλυποδες δ' εν εμοι θαλαμας φωκαι τε μελαιναιπ

Οικα ποιησονται ακηδεα, χητεΐλαων.

*Hom. Hymn. in Apol. 77.*

Of which the following passage of Milton may be taken for a translation, though not so designed: -

"And in their palaces,

Where luxury late reigned, sea monsters whelped,

And stabled."

*Par. Lost, 11:750.*

This image of desolation is handled with great propriety and force by some of the Persian poets: -

"The spider holds the veil in the palace of Caesar;

The owl stands centinel on the watch-tower of Afrasiab."

On this quotation Sir W. Jones observes, noubet is an Arabic word, signifying a turn, a change, a watch; hence noubet zudun in Persian signifies to relieve the guards by the sounds of drums and trumpets. Their office is given by the poet to the owl; as that of purdeh dar, or chamberlain, is elegantly assigned to the spider.

## Chapter 14

### 14. Babylon's fall and Israel's restoration

#### Introduction

Deliverance of Israel from captivity, which shall follow the downfall of the great Babylonish empire, Isaiah 14:1, Isaiah 14:2. Triumphant ode or song of the

children of Jacob, for the signal manifestation of Divine vengeance against their oppressors, vv. 3-23. Prophecy against the Assyrians, Isaiah 14:24, Isaiah 14:25. Certainty of the prophecy, and immutability of the Divine counsels, Isaiah 14:26, Isaiah 14:27. Palestine severely threatened, Isaiah 14:28-31. God shall establish Zion in these troublous times, Isaiah 14:32.

### **Verses 1-3. Prophecy of Israel's restoration anticipates Babylon's fall**

#### **Verse 1**

**And will yet choose Israel** - That is, will still regard Israel as his chosen people; however he may seem to desert them, by giving them up to their enemies, and scattering them among the nations. Judah is sometimes called Israel; see Ezekiel 13:16; Malachi 1:1; Malachi 2:11; : but the name of Jacob and of Israel, used apparently with design in this place, each of which names includes the twelve tribes, and the other circumstances mentioned in this and the next verse, which did not in any complete sense accompany the return from the captivity of Babylon, seem to intimate that this whole prophecy extends its views beyond that event.

#### **Verse 2**

**For servants and handmaids** - For thrallis and thrallesses. - Old Bible. Male and female slaves.

#### **Verse 3**

**In the day "In that day"** - ביום ההוא bayom hahu . The word ההוא hahu is added in two MSS. of Kennicott's, and was in the copies from which the Septuagint and Vulgate translated: εν τη ἡμερᾷ ἐκείνῃ, *in die illa*, (ἡ ἀναπαυσει, MS. Pachom. adding ה ), in that day. This is a matter of no great consequence: however, it restores the text to the common form, almost constantly used on such occasions; and is one among many instances of a word apparently lost out of the printed copies.

### **Verses 4-11. Israel's song of triumph over Babylon's last king**

#### **Verse 4**

**This proverb "This parable"** - משל mashal, I take this to be the general name for poetic style among the Hebrews, including every sort of it, as ranging under one or other, or all of the characters, of sententious, figurative, and sublime; which are all contained in the original notion, or in the use and application of the



word *mashal* . Parables or proverbs, such as those of Solomon, are always expressed in short pointed sentences; frequently figurative, being formed on some comparison; generally forcible and authoritative, both in the matter and the form. And such in general is the style of the Hebrew poetry. The verb *mashal* signifies to rule; to exercise authority; to make equal; to compare one thing with another; to utter parables, or acute, weighty, and powerful speeches, in the form and manner of parables, though not properly such. Thus Balaam's first prophecy, ( Numbers 23:7-10; ), is called his *mashal* ; though it has hardly any thing figurative in it: but it is beautifully sententious, and, from the very form and manner of it, has great spirit, force, and energy. Thus Job's last speeches, in answer to his three friends, chap. 27-31, are called *mashals* ; from no one particular character, which discriminates them from the rest of the poem, but from the sublime, the figurative, the sententious manner which equally prevails through the whole poem, and makes it one of the first and most eminent examples extant of the truly great and beautiful in poetic style. See the note on Proverbs 1:1; (note).

The Septuagint in this place render the word by *θρηνος*, a lamentation. They plainly consider the speech here introduced as a piece of poetry, and of that species of poetry which we call the elegiac; either from the subject, it being a poem on the fall and death of the king of Babylon, or from the form of the composition, which is of the longer sort of Hebrew verse, in which the Lamentations of Jeremiah, called by the Septuagint *Θρηνοι*, are written.

**The golden city ceased** - *מדהבה* *madhebah*, which is here translated golden city, is a Chaldee word. Probably it means that golden coin or ingot which was given to the Babylonians by way of tribute. So the word is understood by the Vulgate, where it is rendered *tributum*; and by Montanus, who translates it *aurea pensio*, the golden pension. Kimchi seems to have understood the word in the same sense. De Rossi translates it *auri dives*, rich in gold, or *auri exactrix*, the exactor of gold; the same as the exactor of tribute.

## Verse 9

**Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee** - That is, Nebuchadnezzar. "It (hell) hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the earth; - the ghosts (rephaim) of all the mighty ones, or goats, (*עֲתוּדֵי* *attudey* ), of the earth - all the oppressors of mankind." What a most terrible idea is here! Tyrannical kings who have oppressed and spoiled mankind, are here represented as enthroned in hell; and as taking a Satanic pleasure in seeing others of the same description enter those abodes of misery!

## Verse 11

**Cover thee "Thy covering"** - Twenty-eight MSS. (ten ancient) of Kennicott's, thirty-nine of De Rossi's, twelve editions, with the Septuagint and Vulgate, read **ומכסה** umechassecha, in the singular number.

**Verses 12-17. Satan addressed as energizer of Babylon's last king**

**Verses 18-27. Future destruction of the Satanic world**

## Verse 12

**O Lucifer, son of the morning** - The Versions in general agree in this translation, and render **הילל** heilel as signifying Lucifer, **Φωσφορος**, the morning star, whether Jupiter or Venus; as these are both bringers of the morning light, or morning stars, annually in their turn. And although the context speaks explicitly concerning Nebuchadnezzar, yet this has been, I know not why, applied to the chief of the fallen angels, who is most incongruously denominated Lucifer, (the bringer of light!) an epithet as common to him as those of Satan and Devil. That the Holy Spirit by his prophets should call this arch-enemy of God and man the light-bringer, would be strange indeed. But the truth is, the text speaks nothing at all concerning Satan nor his fall, nor the occasion of that fall, which many divines have with great confidence deduced from this text. O how necessary it is to understand the literal meaning of Scripture, that preposterous comments may be prevented! Besides, I doubt much whether our translation be correct. **הילל** heilel, which we translate Lucifer, comes from **ילל** yalal, yell, howl, or shriek, and should be translated, "Howl, son of the morning;" and so the Syriac has understood it; and for this meaning Michaelis contends: see his reasons in Parkhurst, under **הלל** halal .

## Verse 13

**I will ascend into heaven** - I will get the empire of the whole world. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God - above the Israelites, who are here termed the stars of God. So the Targum of Jonathan, and R. D. Kimchi. This chapter speaks not of the ambition and fall of Satan, but of the pride, arrogance, and fall of Nebuchadnezzar.

**The mount of the congregation "The mount of the Divine Presence"** - It appears plainly from Exodus 25:22, and Exodus 29:42, Exodus 29:43, where God appoints the place of meeting with Moses, and promises to meet with him before the ark to commune with him, and to speak unto him; and to meet the

children of Israel at the door of the tabernacle; that the tabernacle, and afterwards the door of the tabernacle, and Mount Zion, (or Moriah, which is reckoned a part of Mount Zion), whereon it stood, was called the tabernacle, and the mount of convention or of appointment; not from the people's assembling there to perform the services of their religion, (which is what our translation expresses by calling it the tabernacle of the congregation), but because God appointed that for the place where he himself would meet with Moses, and commune with him, and would meet with the people. Therefore הר מועד har moed, the "mountain of the assembly," or אהל מועד ohel moed, the "tabernacle of the assembly," means the place appointed by God, where he would present himself; agreeably to which I have rendered it in this place, the mount of the Divine Presence.

## Verse 19

**Like an abominable branch "Like the tree abominated"** - That is, as an object of abomination and detestation; such as the tree is on which a malefactor has been hanged. "It is written," saith St. Paul, Galatians 3:13, "Cursed is every man that hangeth on a tree," from Deuteronomy 21:23. The Jews therefore held also as accursed and polluted the tree itself on which a malefactor had been executed, or on which he had been hanged after having been put to death by stoning. *"Non suspendunt super arbore, quae radicibus solo adhaereat; sed super ligno eradicato, ut ne sit excisio molesta: nam lignum, super quo fuit aliquis suspensus, cum suspendioso sepelitur; ne maneat illi malum nomen, et dicant homines, Istud est lignum, in quo suspensus est ille, ὁ δεινὰ . Sic lapis, quo aliquis fuit lapidatus; et gladius, quo fuit occisus is qui est occisus; et sudarium sive mantile, quo fuit aliquis strangulatus; omnia haec cum iis, qui perierunt, sepeliuntur."* Maimonides, apud Casaub. in Baron. Exercitat. 16. An. 34, Numbers 134. *"Cum itaque homo suspensu maximae esset abominationi - Judaei quoque prae caeteris abominabantur lignum quo fuerat suspensus, ita ut illud quoque terra tegerent, tanquam rem abominabilem. Unde interpres Chaldaeus haec verba transtulit כחט מורט kechat temir, sicut virgultum absconditum, sive sepultum."* Kalinski, Vaticinta Observationibus Illustrata, p. 342.

"The Jews never hang any malefactor upon a tree that is growing in the earth, but upon a post fixed in the ground, that it might never be said, 'That is the tree on which such a one was hanged;' for custom required that the tree should be buried with the malefactor. In like manner the stone by which a criminal was stoned to death, or the sword by which he was beheaded, or the napkin or handkerchief by which he was strangled, should be buried with him in the same grave." "For as the hanged man was considered the greatest abomination, so the

very post or wood on which he was hanged was deemed a most abominable thing, and therefore buried under the earth."

Agreeably to which Theodoret, Hist. Ecclesiastes 1:17, Ecclesiastes 1:18, in his account of the finding of the cross by Helena, says, "That the three crosses were buried in the earth near the place of our Lord's sepulcher." And this circumstance seems to confirm the relation of the discovery of the cross of Christ. The crosses were found where the custom required they should be buried.

**The raiment of those that are slain "Clothed with the slain"** - Thirty-five MSS., (ten ancient), and three editions, have the word fully written, לבוש lebush . It is not a noun, but the participle passive; thrown out among the common slain and covered with the dead bodies. So Ecclesiastes 1:11, the earth-worm is said to be his bedcovering. This reading is confirmed by two ancient MSS. in my own collection.

## **Verse 20**

**Because thou hast destroyed thy land, etc. "Because thou hast destroyed thy country; thou hast slain thy people"** - Xenophon gives an instance of this king's wanton cruelty in killing the son of Gobrias, on no other provocation than that, in hunting, he struck a boar and a lion which the king had missed. Cyrop. 4:309.

## **Verse 23**

**I will sweep it with the besom of destruction "I will plunge it in the miry gulf of destruction"** - I have here very nearly followed the Version of the Septuagint; the reasons for which see in the last note on De Poesi Hebr. Praelect, xxviii.

The besom of destruction, as our Version renders it. במטאטא bematate . This, says Kimchi, is a Chaldee word: and it is worthy of remark that the prophet, writing to the Chaldeans, uses several words peculiar to their own language to point out the nature of the Divine judgments, and the causes of them. See the note on Jeremiah 10:11; (note). Sixteen of Kennicott's MSS., and seventeen of De Rossi's, and one ancient of my own, have the word במטאטי bematatey, in the plural. "I will sweep her with the besoms of destruction."

## Verse 25

**I will break the Assyrian - upon my mountains "To crush the Assyrian - on my mountains"** - The Assyrians and Babylonians are the same people, Herod. 1:199, 200. Babylon is reckoned the principal city in Assyria, *ibid.* 178. Strabo says the same thing, lib. 16 *sub init.* The circumstance of this judgment being to be executed on God's mountains is of importance; it may mean the destruction of Sennacherib's army near Jerusalem, and have a still farther view: compare Ezekiel 39:4; and see Lowth on this place of Isaiah.

## Verses 28-32. Oracle upon Philistia.

### Verse 28

**In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden** - Uzziah had subdued the Philistines, 2 Chronicles 26:6, 2 Chronicles 26:7; but, taking advantage of the weak reign of Ahaz, they invaded Judea, and took, and held in possession, some cities in the southern part of the kingdom. On the death of Ahaz, Isaiah delivers this prophecy, threatening them with the destruction that Hezekiah, his son, and great-grandson of Uzziah, should bring upon them: which he effected; for "he smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof," 2 Kings 18:8. Uzziah, therefore, must be meant by the rod that smote them, and by the serpent from whom should spring the flying fiery serpent, Isaiah 14:29, that is, Hezekiah, a much more terrible enemy than even Uzziah had been.

The Targum renders the twenty-ninth verse in a singular way. "For, from the sons of Jesse shall come forth the Messiah; and his works among you shall be as the flying serpent."

### Verse 30

**And the first-born of the poor, etc.** - The Targum goes on applying all to the Messiah. "And the poor of the people shall he feed, and the humble shall dwell securely in his days: and he shall kill thy children with famine, and the remnant of thy people shall he slay."

**I will kill "He will slay"** - The Septuagint reads *ἡμῖν* *hemith*, to the third person, *ἀνελαι* ; and so the Chaldee. The Vulgate remedies the confusion of persons in the present text, by reading both the verbs in the first person.

### Verse 31

**There shall come from the north a smoke "From the north cometh a smoke"** - That is, a cloud of dust raised by the march of Hezekiah's army against Philistia; which lay to the south-west from Jerusalem. A great dust raised has, at a distance, the appearance of smoke: *Fumantes pulvere campi*; "The fields smoking with dust." - Virg. Aen. 11:908.

## **Verse 32**

**The messengers of the nation "The ambassadors of the nations"** - The Septuagint read γοιμ goyim, εθνων, plural; and so the Chaldee, and one MS. The ambassadors of the neighboring nations, that send to congratulate Hezekiah on his success, which in his answer he will ascribe to the protection of God. See 2 Chronicles 32:23. Or, if γοι goi singular, the reading of the text, be preferred, the ambassadors sent by the Philistines to demand peace. - L.

**The Lord hath founded Zion** - Kimchi refers this to the state of Zion under Hezekiah, when the rest of the cities of Judea had been taken, and this only was left for a hope to the poor of God's people: and God so defended it that Rabshakeh could not prevail against it.

The true Church of God is a place of safety; for as all its members are devoted to God, and walk in his testimonies, so they are continually defended and supported by him. In the congregations of his people, God dispenses his light and salvation; hence his poor or humble ones expect in his ordinances the blessings they need.





*The Hanging Gardens of Babylon*





### **Archaeological light**

Painting Hanging Gardens of Babylon in the 16th century by a German artist named Martin Heemskerck . Hanging Gardens of Babylon ( known as the Garden Depending Semiramis ) and the walls of Babylon was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World is located in Al – Hillah , 50 miles south of Baghdad , Iraq across the east bank of the Euphrates .

Wildlife depends actually not depend as strongly bound with rope . Its name is derived from the Greek translation of the Latin word Kremastos or pensilis , who intends not only dependent but anjung , as it is located on top of a porch or patio .

This park was built by Nebuchadnezzar II , grandson of the famous King Hammurabi in about 600 BC as a gift for his wife who misses her home , Amyitis . Amyitis missed the trees and fragrant plants in Persian , while in



another article says that the wife of Nebuchadnezzar II named Amuhia and he comes from the archipelago . The park is expected to disintegrate around 2 century BC. Then the hanging garden is documented by Greek historians such as Strabo and Diodorus circulus .Sheet which records the history of the oldest architectural works include the park as a form of love for someone who is adored in Mesopotamia, Ancient Iraq . In a note Herodotus , an ancient Greek writer mentioned that when King Nebuchadnezzar II, who became king in the kingdom of the new Babylon ( 605-562 BC ) , has been ordered to make the hanging gardens were very beautiful , as a gift Amytis very dear empress .

Hanging Garden is a landscape architectural form typical of Mesopotamia , which has been known to the people of Mesopotamia since the reign of King Hamurabi in the old kingdom of Babylon (1792-1750 BC ). Among the buildings city high sticking in the ground that is usually ditamani plants are very beautiful , so that from a distance looks like a garden that could hang .

Hanging gardens built by King Nebuchadnezzar II around 612 BC its peak, then became very famous all over the world and admired his design until now . Hanging Gardens of Babylon then becomes the kingdom of Babylon the great monument that is second to none. Being very unique architectural, because stratified .

The park is planted with a variety of beautiful trees and dilengkapi irrigation system to a height of 100 meters above the ground . From the top view of the park can be seen around the kingdom of Babylon.

## **Chapters 15-16. Judgment upon Moab**

*Moab was to be pitilessly desolated (15:1-16:9). Her arrogance and pride would be humbled by terrible devastation from Assyria, 16:10-14. Events in the Day of the Lord are foreshadowed (cf. 16:5).*

## **Chapter 15**

### **Introduction**

Prediction of very heavy calamities about to fall upon the Moabites, Isaiah 15:1-9.

This and the following chapter, taken together, make one entire prophecy, very improperly divided into two parts. The time of its delivery, and consequently of

its accomplishment, which was to be in three years from that time, is uncertain; the former not being marked in the prophecy itself, nor the latter recorded in history. But the most probable account is, that it was delivered soon after the foregoing, in the first year of Hezekiah; and that it was accomplished in his fourth year, when Shalmaneser invaded the kingdom of Israel. He might probably march through Moab; and to secure every thing behind him, possess himself of the whole country, by taking their principal strong places Ar and Kirhares. - L. The authorized Version which we have followed in the margin, places the prophecy in this chapter fourteen years earlier than that contained in the two preceding.

Jeremiah has happily introduced much of this prophecy of Isaiah into his own larger prophecy against the same people in his forty-eighth chapter, denouncing God's judgment on Moab, subsequent to the calamity here foretold, and to be executed by Nebuchadnezzar; by which means several mistakes of transcribers in the present text of both prophets may be rectified.

### Verse 1

**Because in the night** - בליל beleil . That both these cities should be taken in the night is a circumstance somewhat unusual; but not so material as to deserve to be so strongly insisted upon. Vitranga, by his remark on this word, shows that he was dissatisfied with it in its plain and obvious meaning, and is forced to have recourse to a very hard metaphorical interpretation of it. *Noctu vel nocturno impetu; vel metaphorice, repente, subito, inexpectata destructione: placet posterius.* Calmet conjectures, and I think it probable, that the true reading is כליל keleil, as the night. There are many mistakes in the Hebrew text arising from the very great similitude of the letters ב beth, and כ caph, which in many MSS., and some printed editions, are hardly distinguishable.

Admitting this reading, the translation will be, -

"Because Ar is utterly destroyed, Moab is undone!

Because Kir is utterly destroyed, Moab is undone!"

### Verse 2

**He is gone to Bajith, and to Dibon** - עלה הבית alah habbayith, should be rendered, he is gone to the House, i.e., to their chief temple, where they practiced idolatry. Dibon was the name of a tower where also was an idolatrous temple; thither they went to weep and pray before their idols, that they might

interpose and save them from their calamities. So R. D. Kimchi. Me is gone to Bajith and to Dibon: but Bishop Lowth reads Beth Dibon; this is the name of one place; and the two words are to be joined together, without the ו vau intervening. So the Chaldee and Syriac. This reading is not supported by any MS. or Version: but some MSS., instead of ער ar, have עיר ir, a city, others have עד ad, unto, and some editions have על al, upon. But all these help little, though they show that the place puzzled both the scribes and the editors.

**On all their heads shall be baldness, etc." On every head there is baldness," etc.** - Herodotus, 2:36, speaks of it as a general practice among all men, except the Egyptians, to cut off their hair as a token of mourning. "Cut off thy hair, and cast it away," says Jeremiah, Jeremiah 7:29, "and take up a lamentation."

Τουτο νυ και γερας οιον οϊζυροισι βροτοισι-144 Κειρασθαι τε κομην, βαλειν τ  
' απο δακρυ παρειωνπ .

*Hom. Odyss. 4:197.*

"The rites of wo

Are all, alas! the living can bestow;

O'er the congenial dust enjoined to shear

The graceful curl, and drop the tender tear."

On every head. - For ראשיו roshaiv, read ראש rosh . So the parallel place, Jeremiah 48:37, and so three MSS., one ancient. An ancient MS. reads על כל ראש al col rosh . Five read בכל ראש bechol rosh, on every head, with the Septuagint and Arabic. And every head. The ו vau, and, is found in thirty MSS., in three editions, and in the Syriac, Vulgate, and Chaldee.

**Cut off "Shorn"** - The printed editions, as well as the MSS., are divided on the reading of this word. Some have גדועה geduah, shorn, others רעוג geruah, diminished. The similitude of the letters ד daleth and ר resh has likewise occasioned many mistakes. In the present case, the sense is pretty much the same with either reading. The text of Jeremiah 48:37; has the latter, diminished. The former reading is found in twelve of Dr. Zennicott's MSS., forty of De Rossi's, and two of my own. A great number of editions have the same reading.

### Verse 3

**With sackcloth** - שקִּים sak . The word is in the plural שקים sakkim, sacks, in one of De Rossi's MSS.

### Verse 4

**The armed soldiers "The very loins"** - So the Septuagint, ἡ σσφους, and the Syriac. They cry out violently, with their utmost force.

### Verse 5

**My heart shall cry out for Moab "The heart of Moab crieth within her"** - For לִבִּי libbi, my heart, the Septuagint reads לבו libbo, his heart, or לב leb ; the Chaldee, לבו libbo . For בְּרִיחַיָּה bericheyha, the Syriac reads בְּרוּחָה berocheh ; and so likewise the Septuagint, rendering it εν αὐτῇ, Edit. Vat: or εν ἐαυτῇ, Edit. Alex. and MSS. I., D. II.

**A heifer of three years old "A young heifer"** - Hebrew, a heifer three years old, in full strength; as Horace uses *equa trima*, for a young mare just coming to her prime. Bochart observes, from Aristotle, Hist. Animal. lib. 4 that in this kind of animals alone the voice of the female is deeper than that of the male; therefore the lowing of the heifer, rather than of the bullock, is chosen by the prophet, as the more proper image to express the mourning of Moab. But I must add that the expression here is very short and obscure; and the opinions of interpreters are various in regard to the meaning. Compare Jeremiah 48:34.

**Shall they go it up "They shall ascend"** - For יַעֲלֶה yaaleh, the Septuagint and a MS. read in the plural, יַעֲלֻ yaalu . And from this passage the parallel place in Jeremiah 48:5; must be corrected; where, for יַעֲלֶה בְּכִי yaaleh bechi, which gives no good sense, read יַעֲלֶה בּוֹ yaaleh bo .

### Verse 7

**"Shall perish"** - אָבָדוּ abadu or אָבָדָה abadeh . This word seems to have been lost out of the text: it is supplied by the parallel place, Jeremiah 48:36. The Syriac expresses it by עָבַר aber, *praeteriit*, "he hath passed;" and the Chaldee by יִתְבַּזְּזוּן yithbazezun, *diripientur*.

**To the brook of the willows "To the valley of willows"** - That is, to Babylon. Hieron. and Jarchi *in loc.*, both referring to Psalm 137:2. So likewise Prideaux, Le Clerc, etc.

## Verse 9

**The waters of Dimon** - Some have Dibon, others have Ribon and Rimon. St. Jerome observes that the same town was called both Dibon and Dimon. The reading is therefore indifferent.

**Upon him that escapeth of Moab, etc. "Upon the escaped of Moab, and Ariel, and the remnant of Admah"** - The Septuagint for עריה aryeh, read אריאל ariel. Ar Moab was called also Ariel or Areopolis, Hieron. and Theodoret. See Cellarius. They make אדמה Admah, also a proper name. Michaelis thinks that the Moabites might be called the remnant of Admah, as sprung from Lot and his daughters, escaped from the destruction of that and the other cities; or, metaphorically, as the Jews are called princes of Sodom, and people of Gomorrah, Isaiah 1:10. Bibliothque Orient. Part v., p. 195. The reading of this verse is very doubtful; and the sense, in every way in which it can be read, very obscure. - L. Calmet thinks there may be a reference to 1 Chronicles 11:22, where it is said, "Benaiah slew two lion-like men of Moab," or the two Ariels of Moab, and would therefore translate, "I will bring down the remnant of Moab like Ariel, (which Benaiah smote), and them that are escaped like Adamah." They shall be exterminated, as were the inhabitants of those two cities. Ariel was a double city - the river Arnon dividing it in two. This is the two Ariels of Moab - not two lion-like men, much less two lions. See Calmet on this place.

## Chapter 16

### Introduction

The distress of Moab pathetically described by the son of the prince, or ruler of the land, being forced to flee for his life through the desert, that he may escape to Judea; and the young women, like young birds scared from their nest, wade helpless through the fords of Arnon, the boundary of their country, to seek protection in some foreign land, Isaiah 16:1, Isaiah 16:2. The prophet addresses Sion, exhorting her to show mercy to her enemies in their distress, that her throne may be established in righteousness, Isaiah 16:3-5. Exceeding great pride of Moab, Isaiah 16:6. The terrible calamities about to fall upon Moab farther described by the languishing of the vine, the ceasing of the vintage, the sound of the prophet's bowels quivering like a harp, etc., Isaiah 16:7-13. Awful nearness of the full accomplishment of the prophecy, Isaiah 16:14.

## Verse 1

**Send ye the lamb, etc. "I will send forth the son, etc."** - Both the reading and meaning of this verse are still more doubtful than those of the preceding. The Septuagint and Syriac read אשלח eshlach, I will send, in the first person singular, future tense: the Vulgate and Talmud Babylon, read שלח shelach, send, singular imperative: some read שלחו shilchu, send ye forth, or shalechu, they send forth. The Syriac, for כר car, a lamb, reads בר bar, a son, which is confirmed by five MSS. of Kennicott and De Rossi. The two first verses describe the distress of Moab on the Assyrian invasion in which even the son of the prince of the country is represented as forced to flee for his life through the desert, that he may escape to Judea; and the young women are driven forth like young birds cast out of the nest, and endeavoring to wade through the fords of the river Arnon. Perhaps there is not so much difficulty in this verse as appears at first view. "Send the lamb to the ruler of the land," may receive light from 2 Kings 3:4, 2 Kings 3:5; : "And Mesha, king of Moab, was a sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel one hundred thousand lambs with their wool, and one hundred thousand rams: but when Ahab was dead, the king of Moab rebelled against Israel." Now the prophet exhorts them to begin paying the tribute as formerly, that their punishment might be averted or mitigated.

## Verse 3

**Take counsel "Impart counsel"** - The Vulgate renders the verbs in the beginning of this verse in the singular number, So the Keri; and so likewise sixty-one MSS. of Kennicott's and De Rossi's have it, and nineteen editions, and the Syriac. The verbs throughout the verse are also in the feminine gender; agreeing with Zion, which I suppose to be understood.

## Verse 4

**Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab "Let the outcasts of Moab sojourn with thee, O Zion"** - Setting the points aside, this is by much the most obvious construction of the Hebrew, as well as most agreeable to the context, and the design of the prophet. And it is confirmed by the Septuagint οἱ φυγάδες Μωαβ, and Syriac.

**The oppressors "The oppressor"** - Perhaps the Israelites, who in the time of Ahab invaded Judah, defeated his army, slaying one hundred and twenty thousand men, and brought the kingdom to the brink of destruction. Judah, being now in a more prosperous condition, is represented as able to receive and to protect the fugitive Moabites. And with those former times of distress the

security and flourishing state of the kingdom under the government of Hezekiah is contrasted.

### Verse 5

**In mercy shall the throne be established** - May not this refer to the throne of Hezekiah? Here we have the character of such a king as cannot fail to be a blessing to the people.

1. "He sitteth on the throne in truth" - He does not merely profess to be the father and protector of his people: but he is actually such.
2. He is judging. He is not a man of war or blood, who wastes his subjects' lives and treasures in contentions with neighboring nations, in order to satisfy his ambition by the extension of his territory. On the contrary, his whole life is occupied in the distribution of justice.
3. He seeketh judgment. He seeks out the poor distressed ones who cannot make their way to him, and avenges them on their oppressors.
4. He hastens righteousness. He does not suffer any of the courts of justice to delay the determination of the causes brought before them: he so orders that the point in litigation be fairly, fully, and speedily heard; and then judgment pronounced. Delays in the execution of justice answer little end but the enriching of unprincipled lawyers.

### Verse 6

**We have heard of the pride of Moab "We have heard the pride of Moab"** - For גא ge, read גאִה geah ; two MSS., one ancient, and Jeremiah 48:29. Zephaniah, Zephaniah 2:8-10, in his prophecy against Moab, the subject of which is the same with that of Jeremiah in his forty-eighth chapter, (see the note on Isaiah 15:1; (note)), enlarges much on the pride of Moab, and their insolent behavior towards the Jews: -

"I have heard the reproach of Moab;

And the revilings of the sons of Ammon:

Who have reproached my people;

And have magnified themselves against their borders.

Therefore, as I live, saith Jehovah God of hosts, the God of Israel:

Surely Moab shall be as Sodom,



And the sons of Ammon as Gomorrah:

A possession of nettles, and pits of salt,

And a desolation for ever.

The residue of my people shall spoil them,

And the remnant of my nation shall dispossess them:

This shall they have for their pride;

Because they have raised a reproach, and have magnified themselves

Against the people of Jehovah God of hosts."

Verse 7

**For the foundations of Kir-hareseth "For the men of Kirhares"** - A palpable mistake in this place is happily corrected by the parallel text of Jeremiah 48:31, where, instead of אִשִּׁיִּי ashishey, foundations or flagons, we read אִנְשֵׁי anshey, men. In the same place of Jeremiah, and in Jeremiah 48:36, and here in Isaiah 16:11, the name of the city is Kirhares, not Kirhareseth.

Verse 8

**Languish "Are put to shame"** - Here the text of Jeremiah leaves us much at a loss, in a place that seems to be greatly corrupted. The Septuagint join the two last words of this verse with the beginning of the following. Their rendering is: και ουκ εντραπηση, τα πεδια Εσεβων . For אַךְ ach they must have read אַל al ; otherwise, how came they by the negative, which seems not to belong to this place? Neither is it easy to make sense of the rest without a small alteration, by reading, instead of εντραπηση τα, εντραπησεται . In a word, the Arabic version taken from the Septuagint, plainly authorizes this reading of the Septuagint, and without the negative; and it is fully confirmed by MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. II., which have both of them εντραπησεται πεδια Εσεβων, without the negative; which makes an excellent sense, and, I think, gives us the true reading of the Hebrew text; אַךְ נִחְלֵמוּ שְׁדָמוֹת חֶשְׁבֹן ak nichlemu shadmoth cheshbon . They frequently render the verb נִחְלַם nichlam by εντρεπομαι . And נִחְלֵמוּ nichlemu answers perfectly well to אִמְלַל umlal, the parallel word in the next line. The MSS. vary in expressing the word נִחְיָם nechaim, which gives no tolerable sense in this place; one reads נִחְיָם nochaim ; two others בִּנְחָיִם bechaim ; in another

the כ caph is upon a rasure of two letters; and the Vulgate instead of it reads מכותם mecotham, *plagas suas*. - L.

For the men of Kirhares ye shall make a moan. For the fields of Heshbon are put to shame. This is Bp. Lowth's sense of the passage.

**Her branches are stretched out "Her branches extended themselves"** - For נטשו nitteshu, a MS. has נגשו niggeshu ; which may perhaps be right. Compare Jeremiah 48:32, which has in this part of the sentence the synonymous word נגאו nagau .

The meaning of this verse is, that the wines of Sibmah and Heshbon were greatly celebrated, and in high repute with all the great men and princes of that and the neighboring countries; who indulged themselves even to intemperance in the use of them. So that their vines were so much in request as not only to be propagated all over the country of Moab to the sea of Sodom, but to have scions of them sent even beyond the sea into foreign countries.

הלמו halemu, knocked down, demolished; that is overpowered, intoxicated. The drunkards of Ephraim are called by the prophet, Isaiah 28:1, הלומי יין halumey yayin, drinkers of wine. See Schultens on Proverbs 23:25. Gratius, speaking of the Mareotic wine, says of it,

*Pharios quae fregit noxia reges*. Cyneg. 312.

## Verse 9

**With the weeping "As with the weeping"** - For בכי bibechi, a MS. reads בכי bechi . In Jeremiah 48:32, it is מבכי mibbechi . The Septuagint read כבכי kibeki, as with weeping, which I follow.

**For thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen "And upon thy vintage the destroyer hath fallen"** - ועל קצירך הידד נפל veal ketsirech heidad naphal . In these few words there are two great mistakes, which the text of Jeremiah 48:32; rectifies. For קצירך ketsirech, it has בצירך betsirech ; and for הידד heidad, שדד shoded ; both which corrections the Chaldee in this place confirms. As to the first,

"Hesebon and Eleale, and

The flowery dale of Sibmah, clad with vines,"

were never celebrated for their harvests; it was the vintage that suffered by the irruption of the enemy; and so read the Septuagint and Syriac. הֵידָד heidad is the noisy acclamation of the treaders of the grapes. And see what sense this makes in the literal rendering of the Vulgate: *super messem tuam vox calcantium irruit*, "upon thy harvest the voice of the treaders rushes." The reading in Jeremiah 48:32; is certainly right, שָׁדָד נָפַל shoded naphal, "the destroyer hath fallen." The shout of the treaders does not come in till the next verse; in which the text of Isaiah in its turn mends that of Jeremiah 48:33, where instead of the first הֵידָד heidad, "the shout," we ought undoubtedly to read, as here, הַדְרֵךְ haddorech, "the treader."

### Verse 10

**Neither shall there be shouting "An end is put to the shouting"** - The Septuagint read הִשְׁבַּת hishbeth, passive, and in the third person; rightly, for God is not the speaker in this place. The rendering of the Septuagint is πεπαυται γαρ κελευσμα, "the cry ceaseth;" which last word, necessary to the rendering of the Hebrew and to the sense, is supplied by MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. II., having been lost out of the other copies.

### Verse 12

**When it is seen that Moab, etc. "When Moab shall see," etc.** - For נִרְאָה nirah, a MS. reads רָאָה raah, and so the Syriac and Chaldee. "Perhaps כִּי נִרְאָה ki nirah is only a various reading of כִּי נִלְאָה ki nilah." Secker. A very probable conjecture.

### Verse 14

**Within three years** - בְּשָׁלִשׁ beshalish כְּשָׁלִשׁ keshalish, according, or in or about three years, is the reading of nine of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., and two ancient editions.

But the present reading may well stand: "Now, the Lord hath spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of a hireling." It seems as if this prophecy had been delivered before, without any time specified for its fulfillment; but now the time is determined" in three years, as the years of a hireling" - for, as a hireling counts even to a single day, and will not abide with his employer an hour beyond the time agreed on; so, in three years, even to a day, from the delivery of this prophecy, shall destruction come upon Moab. This is the import of the present text; but if we take כְּשָׁלִשׁ keshalish, AS in three years, or in about three years' time, the prophecy is not so definite.

These three years, says Calmet, are mentioned from the death of Ahaz, see Isaiah 14:28, and end the third year of Hezekiah, three years before the taking of Samaria by Shalmaneser. This conqueror did not ruin Moab so completely as not to leave a man in the land; the final desolation of Moab was reserved for Nebuchadnezzar, five years after the taking of Jerusalem.

**Feeble "And without strength"** - An ancient MS., with the Septuagint, reads אלו velo, "and not."

## **Chapter 17**

### **17. Judgment upon Damascus and Samaria**

#### **Introduction**

Judgments of God upon Damascus, Isaiah 17:1-3; and upon Israel, Isaiah 17:4-6. Good effects of these judgments on the small remnant or gleanings that should escape them, Isaiah 17:7, Isaiah 17:8. The same judgments represented in other but stronger terms, and imputed to irreligion and neglect of God, Isaiah 17:9-11. The remaining verses are a distinct prophecy, a beautiful detached piece, worked up with the greatest elegance, sublimity, and propriety; and forming a noble description of the formidable invasion and sudden overthrow of Sennacherib, exactly suitable to the event, Isaiah 17:12-14.

This prophecy by its title should relate only to Damascus; but it full as much concerns, and more largely treats of, the kingdom of Samaria and the Israelites, confederated with Damascus and the Syrians against the kingdom of Judah. It was delivered probably soon after the prophecies of the seventh and eighth chapters, in the beginning of the reign of Ahaz; and was fulfilled by Tiglath-pileser's taking Damascus, and carrying the people captives to Kir, ( 2 Kings 16:9;), and overrunning great part of the kingdom of Israel, and carrying a great number of the Israelites also captives to Assyria; and still more fully in regard to Israel, by the conquest of the kingdom, and the captivity of the people, effected a few years after by Shalmaneser. - L.

#### **Verse 1**

**The burden of Damascus** - Which is, according to the common version, The cities of Aroer are forsaken. It has already been observed by the learned prelate that the prophecy, as it relates to Damascus, was executed in the beginning of the reign of Ahaz, probably about the third year. If we credit Midrash, the Damascenes were the most extensive and flagrant of all idolaters. "There were

in Damascus three hundred and sixty-five streets, in each of these was an idol, and each idol had his peculiar day of worship; so that the whole were worshipped in the course of the year." This, or any thing like this, was a sufficient reason for this city's destruction.

**A ruinous heap** - For מֵעִי mei, "a ruinous heap," the Septuagint reads לֵעִי lei, "for a ruin," the Vulgate כְּעִי kei, "as a ruin." I follow the former.

## Verse 2

**The cities of Aroer are forsaken "The cities are deserted for ever"** - What has Aroer on the river Arnon to do with Damascus? and if there be another Aroer on the northern border of the tribe of Gad, as Reland seems to think there might be, this is not much more to the purpose. Besides, the cities of Aroer, if Aroer itself is a city, makes no good sense. The Septuagint, for עֲרֹעַר aroer, read אֵדֵי אֲדֵי adey ad, ἄς τοῦ αἰῶνα, for ever, or for a long duration. The Chaldee takes the word for a verb from עָרָה arah, translating it חֲרְבוּ cherebu, *devastabuntur*, "they shall be wasted." The Syriac read אֲדֹעִיר adoeir. So that the reading is very doubtful. I follow the Septuagint as making the plainest sense.

## Verse 3

**The remnant of Syria "The pride of Syria"** - For שְׂאֵר shear, "remnant," Houbigant reads שֵׂאֵת seeth, "pride," answering, as the sentence seems evidently to require, to כְּבוֹד cabod, "the glory of Israel." The conjecture is so very probable that I venture to follow it.

**As the glory** - בִּכְבוֹד bichbod, "In the glory," is the reading of eight MSS., and ten editions.

## Verse 4

**In that day** - That is, says Kimchi, the time when the ten tribes of Israel, which were the glory of Jacob, should be carried into captivity.

## Verse 5

**As when the harvestman gathereth "As when one gathereth"** - That is, the king of Assyria shall sweep away the whole body of the people, as the reaper strippeth off the whole crop of corn; and the remnant shall be no more in proportion than the scattered ears left to the gleaner. The valley of Rephaim near Jerusalem was celebrated for its plentiful harvest; it is here used poetically for

any fruitful country. One MS., and one ancient edition, has באסף beesoph, "In gathering," instead of כאסף keesoph, "AS the gathering."

## Verse 8

**The altars, the work of his hands** "The altars dedicated to the work of his hands" - The construction of the words, and the meaning of the sentence, in this place are not obvious; all the ancient Versions, and most of the modern, have mistaken it. The word מעשה maaseh, "the work," stands *in regimine* with מזבחות mizbechoth, "altars," not in opposition to it; it means the, altars of the work of their hand; that is of the idols, which are the work of their hands. Thus Kimchi has explained it, and Le Clerc has followed him.

## Verse 9

**As a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch** "the Hivites and the Amorites" - החורש והאמיר hachoresh vahaamir . No one has ever yet been able to make any tolerable sense of these words. The translation of the Septuagint has happily preserved what seems to be the true reading of the text, as it stood in the copies of their time; though the words are now transposed, either in the text or in their Version; οἱ Ἀμαρρηῖται καὶ οἱ Ἑβαιοί, "the Amorites and the Hivites." It is remarkable that many commentators, who never thought of admitting the reading of the Septuagint, understand the passage as referring to that very event which their Version expresses; so that it is plain that nothing can be more suitable to the context. "My father," says Bishop Lowth, "saw the necessity of admitting this variation at a time when it was not usual to make so free with the Hebrew text." Mr. Parkhurst is not satisfied with the prelate's adoption of the reading of the Septuagint, "the Hivites and the Amorites." He thinks the difficult words should be thus rendered; he takes the whole verse: "And his fortified cities shall be like the leaving, or what is left כעזובת caazubath, of or in a ploughed field, החורש hachoresh, or on a branch which they leave coram, before, the children of Israel." Which he considers a plain reference to the Mosaic laws relative to the not gleaning of their ploughed fields, vineyards, and oliveyards, but leaving עזב ozeb, somewhat of the fruits, for the poor of the land; Leviticus 9:9, Leviticus 9:10; Deuteronomy 24:19-21, in the Hebrew. I fear that the text is taken by storm on both interpretations. One MS. has כל ערי col arey, "all the cities;" and instead of החלש hachalash, "of the branch," six MSS. have החודש hachodesh, "of the month." But this is probably a mistake.

## Verse 10

**Strange slips "Shoots from a foreign soil"** - The pleasant plants, and shoots from a foreign soil, are allegorical expressions for strange and idolatrous worship; vicious and abominable practices connected with it; reliance on human aid, and on alliances entered into with the neighboring nations, especially Egypt; to all which the Israelites were greatly addicted, and in their expectations from which they should be grievously disappointed.

## Verse 12

**Woe to the multitude** - The three last verses of this chapter seem to have no relation to the foregoing prophecy, to which they are joined. It is a beautiful piece, standing singly and by itself; for neither has it any connection with what follows: whether it stands in its right place, or not, I cannot say. It is a noble description of the formidable invasion and the sudden overthrow of Sennacherib; which is intimated in the strongest terms and the most expressive images, exactly suitable to the event.

**Like the rushing of mighty waters!** - Five words, three at the end of the twelfth verse, and two at the beginning of the thirteenth, are omitted in eight MSS., with the Syriac; that is, in effect, the repetition contained in the first line of Isaiah 17:13; in this translation, is not made. After having observed that it is equally easy to account for the omission of these words by a transcriber if they are genuine, or their insertion if they are not genuine, occasioned by his carrying his eye backwards to the word **לַאֲמִים** leammim, or forwards to **יֶשְׁאוֹן** yashaon, I shall leave it to the reader's judgment to determine whether they are genuine or not. Instead of **כַּהֲמוֹת** cahamoth, "as the roaring," five MSS. and the Vulgate have **כַּהֲמוֹן** kehamon, "as the multitude."

## Verse 14

**He is not "He is no more"** - For **אֵינְנוּ** einennu ten MSS. of Dr. Kennicott's, (three ancient), ten of De Rossi's, and two editions, and the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, Vulgate, and Arabic, have **וְאֵינְנוּ** veeinenno . This particle, authenticated by so many good vouchers, restores the sentence to its true poetical form, implying a repetition of some part of the parallel line preceding, thus: -

"At the season of evening, behold terror!

Before the morning, and [behold] he is no more!"



**That spoil us** - For שוסינו shoseynu, them that spoil us, fifteen MSS., one edition, and the Syriac have שוסנו shosenu, him that spoileth us. And for לבזזינו lebozezeynu, them that rob us, six MSS. and the Syriac have לבוזזנו lebozzeno, him that robbeth us: and these readings make the place answer better to Sennacherib, according to Lowth's conjecture. Though God may permit the wicked to prevail for a time against his people, yet in the end those shall be overthrown, and the glory of the Lord shall shine brightly on them that fear him; for the earth shall be subdued, and the universe filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen!

## Chapter 18

### 18. The judgment upon Ethiopia

#### Introduction

This chapter contains a very obscure prophecy; possibly designed to give the Jews, and perhaps the Egyptians, whose country is supposed to be meant, Isaiah 18:1, Isaiah 18:2, and with whom many Jews resided, an indignation of God's interposition in favor of Sion, Isaiah 18:3, Isaiah 18:4; and of his counsels in regard to the destruction of their common enemy, Sennacherib, whose vast army, just as he thought his projects ripe, and ready to be crowned with success, Isaiah 18:5, should become a prey to the beasts of the field, and to the fowls of heaven, Isaiah 18:6; and that Egypt should be grateful to God for the deliverance vouchsafed her, Isaiah 18:7.

This is one of the most obscure prophecies in the whole Book of Isaiah. The subject of it, the end and design of it, the people to whom it is addressed, the history to which it belongs, the person who sends the messengers, and the nation to whom the messengers are sent, are all obscure and doubtful. - L.

#### Verse 1

**Wo to the land** - הוי ארץ hoi arets ! This interjection should be translated ho! for it is properly a particle of calling: Ho, land! Attend! Give ear!

**Shadowing with wings "The winged cymbal"** - צלצל כנפים tsiltsal kenaphayim . I adopt this as the most probable of the many interpretations that have been given of these words. It is Bochart's: see Phaleg, 4:2. The Egyptian sistrum is expressed by a periphrasis; the Hebrews had no name for it in their language, not having in use the instrument itself. The cymbal they had was an instrument in its use and sound not much unlike the sistrum; and to distinguish it from the

sistrum, they called it the cymbal with wings. The cymbal was a round hollow piece of metal, which, being struck against another, gave a ringing sound: the sistrum was a round instrument, consisting of a broad rim of metal, through which from side to side ran several loose laminae or small rods of metal, which being shaken, gave a like sound. These, projecting on each side, had somewhat the appearance of wings; or might be very properly expressed by the same word which the Hebrews used for wings, or for the extremity, or a part of any thing projecting. The sistrum is given in a medal of Adrian, as the proper attribute of Egypt. See Addison on Medals, Series 3. No. 4; where the figure of it may be seen. The frame of the sistrum was in shape rather like the ancient lyre; it was not round.

If we translate shadowing with wings, it may allude to the multitude of its vessels, whose sails may be represented under the notion of wings. The second verse seems to support this interpretation. Vessels of bulrushes, גומא gome, or rather the flag papyrus, so much celebrated as the substance on which people wrote in ancient times, and from which our paper is denominated. The sails might have been made of this flag: but whole canoes were constructed from it. Mat sails are used to the present day in China. The Vulgate fully understood the meaning of the word, and has accordingly translated, *in vasis papyri*, "in vessels of papyrus." Reshi vesselis. - Old MS. Bib. This interpretation does not please Bp. Lowth, and for his dissent he gives the following reasons: -

In opposition to other interpretations of these words which have prevailed, it may be briefly observed that צלצל tsiltzel is never used to signify shadow, nor is כנף canaph applied to the sails of ships. If, therefore, the words are rightly interpreted the winged cymbal, meaning the sistrum, Egypt must be the country to which the prophecy is addressed. And upon this hypothesis the version and explanation must proceed. I farther suppose, that the prophecy was delivered before Sennacherib's return from his Egyptian expedition, which took up three years; and that it was designed to give to the Jews, and perhaps likewise to the Egyptians, an intimation of God's counsels in regard to the destruction of their great and powerful enemy.

**Which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia "Which borders on the rivers of Cush" -** What are the rivers of Cush? whether the eastern branches of the lower Nile, the boundary of Egypt towards Arabia, or the parts of the upper Nile towards Ethiopia, it is not easy to determine. The word מעבר meeber signifies either on this side or on the farther side: I have made use of the same kind of ambiguous expression in the translation.

## Verse 2

**In vessels of bulrushes "In vessels of papyrus"** - This circumstance agrees perfectly well with Egypt. It is well known that the Egyptians commonly used on the Nile a light sort of ships, or boats, made of the reed papyrus. *Ex ipso quidem papyro navigia texunt.* Pliny, 42:11.

*Conseritur bibula Memphitis cymba papyro.*

*Lucan, 4:136.*

**Go, ye swift messengers** - To this nation before mentioned, who, by the Nile, and by their numerous canals, have the means of spreading the report in the most expeditious manner through the whole country: go, ye swift messengers, and carry this notice of God's designs in regard to them. By the swift messengers are meant, not any particular persons specially appointed to this office, but any of the usual conveyers of news whatsoever, travelers, merchants, and the like, the instruments and agents of common fame. These are ordered to publish this declaration made by the prophet throughout Egypt, and to all the world; and to excite their attention to the promised visible interposition of God.

**Scattered "Stretched out in length"** - Egypt, that is, the fruitful part, exclusive of the deserts on each side, is one long vale, through the middle of which runs the Nile, bounded on each side to the east and west by a chain of mountains seven hundred and fifty miles in length; in breadth from one to two or three days' journey: even at the widest part of the Delta, from Pelusium to Alexandria, not above two hundred and fifty miles broad. Egmont and Hayman, and Pococke.

**Peeled "Smoothed"** - Either relating to the practice of the Egyptian priests, who made their bodies smooth by shaving off their hair, (see Herod. 2:37); or rather to their country's being made smooth, perfectly plain and level, by the overflowing of the Nile.

**Meted out "Meted out by line"** - It is generally referred to the frequent necessity of having recourse to mensuration in Egypt, in order to determine the boundaries after the inundations of the Nile; to which even the origin of the science of geometry is by some ascribed. Strabo, lib. 17 sub init.

**Trodden down** - Supposed to allude to a peculiar method of tillage in use among the Egyptians. Both Herodotus, (lib. ii.), and Diodorus, (lib. i.), say that when the Nile had retired within its banks, and the ground became somewhat

dry, they sowed their land, and then sent in their cattle, (their hogs, says the former), to tread in the seed; and without any farther care expected the harvest.

**The rivers have spoiled "The rivers have nourished"** - The word בָּזָאוּ bazeu is generally taken to be an irregular form for בָּזְזוּ bazezu, "have spoiled," as four MSS. have it in this place; and so most of the Versions, both ancient and modern, understand it. On which Schultens, Gram. Hebrews p. 491, has the following re; mark: "*Ne minimam quidem speciem veri habet בָּזָאוּ bazau, Esai. Isaiah 18:2, elatum pro בָּזְזוּ bazazu, deripiunt. Haec esset anomalia, cui nihil simile in toto linguae ambitu. In talibus nil finire, vel fateri ex mera agi conjectura, tutius justiusque. Radicem בָּזָא baza olim extare potuisse, quis neget? Si cognatum quid sectandum erat, ad בָּזָה bazah, contempsit, potius decurrendum fuisset; ut בָּזָאוּ bazeu, pro בָּזָו bazu, sit enuntiatum, vel בָּזִיו baziv. Digna phrasis, flumina contemunt terram, i.e., inundant.*" "בָּזָא baza, Arab. extulit se superbius, item subjecit sibi: unde praet. pl. בָּזְאוּ bazeu, subjecerunt sibi, i.e., inundarunt." - Simonis' Lexic. Heb.

A learned friend has suggested to me another explanation of the word. בָּזָא baza, Syr., and בִּיזָא beiza, Chald., signifies uber, "a dug," mamma, "a breast;" agreeably to which the verb signifies to nourish. This would perfectly well suit with the Nile: whereas nothing can be more discordant than the idea of spoiling and plundering; for to the inundation of the Nile Egypt owed every thing; the fertility of the soil, and the very soil itself. Besides, the overflowing of the Nile came on by gentle degrees, covering with out laying waste the country: "*Mira aequae naturae fluminis, quod cum caeteri omnes abluant terras et eviscerent, Nilus tanto caeteris major adeo nihil exedit, nec abradit, ut contra adjiciat vires; minimumque in eo sit, quod solum temperet. Illato enim limo arenas saturat ac jungit; debetque illi Aegyptus non tantum fertilitatem terrarum, sed ipsas.*" - Seneca, Nat. Quaest., 4:2. I take the liberty, therefore, which Schultens seems to think allowable in this place, of hazarding a conjectural interpretation. It is a fact that the Ganges changes its course, and overruns and lays barren whole districts, from which it was a few years back several miles distant. Such changes do not nourish but spoil the ground.

### Verse 3

**When he lifteth up an ensign "When the standard is lifted up"** - I take God to be the Agent in this verse; and that by the standard and the trumpet are meant the meteors, the thunder, the lightning, the storm, earthquake, and tempest, by which Sennacherib's army shall be destroyed, or by which at least the destruction of it shall be accompanied; as it is described in Isaiah 10:16, Isaiah 10:17; Isaiah 29:6, and Isaiah 30:30, Isaiah 30:31. See also Psalm 76:1-12;

(note), and the title of it, according to the Septuagint, Vulgate and Aethiopic. They are called, by a bold metaphor, the standard lifted up, and the trumpet sounded. The latter is used by Homer, I think with great force, in his introduction to the battle of the gods; though I find it has disgusted some of the minor critics: -

Βραχε δ' ευρεία χθων,-144 Αμφι δε σαλπιγζεν μεγας ουρανοσπ .

*Il. 21:388.*

"Heaven in loud thunders bids the trumpet sound,  
And wide beneath them groans the rending ground."

#### **Verse 4**

**For so the Lord said unto me "For thus hath Jehovah said unto me"** - The subject of the remaining part of this chapter is, that God would comfort and support his own people, though threatened with immediate destruction by the Assyrians; that Sennacherib's great designs and mighty efforts against them should be frustrated; and that his vast expectations should be rendered abortive, when he thought them mature, and just ready to be crowned with success; that the chief part of his army should be made a prey for the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, (for this is the meaning of the allegory continued through the fifth and sixth verses); and that Egypt, being delivered from his oppression, and avenged by the hand of God of the wrongs which she had suffered, should return thanks for the wonderful deliverance, both of herself and of the Jews, from this most powerful adversary.

**Like a clear heat "Like the clear heat"** - The same images are employed by an Arabian poet: -

*Solis more fervens, dum frigus ; quumque ardet*

*Sirius, tum vero frigus ipse et umbra .*

Which is illustrated in the note by a like passage from another Arabian poet: -

*Calor est hyeme, refrigerium aestate .*

Excerpta ex Hamasa; published by Schultens, at the end of Erpenius's Arabic Grammar, p. 425.

**Upon herbs "After rain"** - "אור aur here signifies rain, according to what is said Job 36:11; : 'The cloud scatters his rain.'" - Kimchi. In which place of Job the Chaldee paraphrast does indeed explain אורו auro by מטריה matereyh ; and so again Job 36:21; and Job 36:30. This meaning of the word seems to make the best sense in this place; it is to be wished that it were better supported.

**In the heat of harvest "In the day of harvest"** - For בהם bechom, in the heat, fourteen MSS., (several ancient), the Septuagint, Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate read ביום beyom, in the day. The mistake seems to have arisen from כהם kechom in the line above.

### Verse 5

**The flower "The blossom"** - Hebrews her blossom; נצה nitstsah, that is, the blossom of the vine, גפן gephen, vine, understood, which is of the common gender. See Genesis 40:10. Note, that by the defective punctuation of this word, many interpreters, and our translators among the rest, have been led into a grievous mistake, (for how can the swelling grape become a blossom?) taking the word נצה nitstsah for the predicate; whereas it is the subject of the proposition, or the nominative case to the verb.

### Verse 7

**The present "A gift"** - The Egyptians were in alliance with the kingdom of Judah, and were fellow-sufferers with the Jews under the invasion of their common enemy Sennacherib; and so were very nearly interested in the great and miraculous deliverance of that kingdom, by the destruction of the Assyrian army. Upon which wonderful event it is said, 2 Chronicles 32:23, that "many brought gifts unto Jehovah to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah; so that he was magnified of all nations from henceforth." It is not to be doubted, that among these the Egyptians distinguished themselves in their acknowledgments on this occasion.

**Of a people "From a people"** - Instead of עם am, a people, the Septuagint and Vulgate read מעם meam, from a people, which is confirmed by the repetition of it in the next line. The difference is of importance; for if this be the true reading, the prediction of the admission of Egypt into the true Church of God is not so explicit as it might otherwise seem to be. However, that event is clearly foretold at the end of the next chapter. - L.

## **19-20. The judgment of Egypt**

### **Chapter 19**

#### **Introduction**

Prophecy concerning Egypt, in which her lamentable condition under the Babylonians, Persians, etc., is forcibly pointed out, vv. 1-17. The true religion shall be propagated in Egypt; referring primarily to the great spread of Judaism in that country in the reign of the Ptolemies, and ultimately to its reception of the Gospel in the latter days, Isaiah 19:18-22. Profound peace between Egypt, Assyria, and Israel, and their blessed condition under the Gospel, Isaiah 19:23-25.

Not many years after the destruction of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem, by which the Egyptians were freed from the yoke with which they were threatened by so powerful an enemy, who had carried on a successful war of three years' continuance against them; the affairs of Egypt were again thrown into confusion by intestine broils among themselves, which ended in a perfect anarchy, that lasted some few years. This was followed by an aristocracy, or rather tyranny, of twelve princes, who divided the country between them, and at last by the sole dominion of Psammitichus, which he held for fifty-four years. Not long after that followed the invasion and conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, and then by the Persians under Cambyses, the son of Cyrus. The yoke of the Persians was so grievous, that the conquest of the Persians by Alexander may well be considered as a deliverance to Egypt; especially as he and his successors greatly favored the people and improved the country. To all these events the prophet seems to have had a view in this chapter; and in particular, from Isaiah 19:18, the prophecy of the propagation of the true religion in Egypt seems to point to the flourishing state of Judaism in that country, in consequence of the great favor shown to the Jews by the Ptolemies. Alexander himself settled a great many Jews in his new city Alexandria, granting them privileges equal to those of the Macedonians. The first Ptolemy, called Soter, carried great numbers of them thither, and gave them such encouragement that still more of them were collected there from different parts; so that Philo reckons that in his time there were a million of Jews in that country. These worshipped the God of their fathers; and their example and influence must have had a great effect in spreading the knowledge and worship of the true God through the whole country. See Bp. Newton on the Prophecies, Dissert. xii.



## Verse 1

**The burden of Egypt** - That is, the prophet's declaration concerning Egypt.

## Verse 3

**They shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards** - And thei schul asken their symulacres, and their debynouris, and their devyl clepers, and their devyl sacristers. - Old Bible. The import of the original words has already been given where they occur in the Pentateuch. See Deuteronomy 18:10, etc.

## Verse 4

**A cruel lord "Cruel lords"** - Nebuchadnezzar in the first place, and afterwards the whole succession of Persian kings, who in general were hard masters, and grievously oppressed the country. Note, that for קשה kasheh, lord, a MS. reads קשים kashim, lords, agreeable to which is the rendering of the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

## Verse 5

**The river shall be wasted and dried up** - The Nile shall not overflow its banks; and if no inundation, the land must become barren. For, as there is little or no rain in Egypt, its fertility depends on the overflowing of the Nile.

## Verse 6

**Shall turn the rivers far away "Shall become putrid"** - האזניחו heeznichu . This sense of the word, which Simonis gives in his Lexicon, from the meaning of it in Arabic, suits the place much better than any other interpretation hitherto given; and that the word in Hebrew had some such signification, is probable from 2 Chronicles 29:19, where the Vulgate renders it by *polluit*, polluted, and the Targum, by profaned, and made abominable, which the context in that place seems plainly to require. The form of the verb here is very irregular; and the rabbins and grammarians seem to give no probable account of it.

## Verse 8

**The fishers also "And the fishers"** - There was great plenty of fish in Egypt; see Numbers 11:5. "The Nile," says Diodorus, lib. i., "abounds with incredible

numbers of all sorts of fish." And much more the lakes. So Egmont, Pococke, etc.

### Verse 9

**They that work in fine flax** - פשתים שריקות pishtim sericoth, heckled flax, i.e., flax dressed on the heckle, or comb used for that purpose. The Vulgate uses the word *pectentes*, combing.

They that weave networks shall be confounded - And confounden schul ben that wrogten flax, plattinge and webynge sotel thingis. - Old MS. Bible.

### Verse 10

**And they shall be broken, etc. "Her stores"** - שתתיה shathotheyha, αποθηκαι, granaries. - Aquila.

**All that make sluices and ponds for fish "All that make a gain of pools for fish"** - This obscure line is rendered by different interpreters in very different manners. Kimchi explains אגמי agmey as if it were the same with אגמה agemah, from Job 30:25, in which he is followed by some of the rabbins, and supported by the Septuagint: and שכר secher, which I translate gain, and which some take for nets or enclosures, the Septuagint render by ζυθον, strong drink or beer, which it is well known was much used in Egypt; and so likewise the Syriac, retaining the Hebrew word שכרא sekra . I submit these very different interpretations to the reader's judgment. The Version of the Septuagint is as follows:

Και παντες οι ποιουντες τον ζυθον λυπηθησονται, και τας ψυχας πονεσουσι·  
"And all they that make barley wine shall mourn, and be grieved in soul."

### Verse 11

**The counsel of the wise counselors of Pharaoh is become brutish "Have counseled a brutish counsel"** - The sentence as it now stands in the Hebrew, is imperfect: it wants the verb. Archbishop Secker conjectures that the words פרעה פרעצי yoatsey pharoh should be transposed; which would in some degree remove the difficulty. But it is to be observed, that the translator of the Vulgate seems to have found in his copy the verb יעצו yaatsu added after פרעה pharoh : *Sapientes consilarii Pharaonis dederunt consilium insipiens*, "The wise counsellors of Pharaoh gave unwise counsel." This is probably the true reading: it is perfectly

agreeable to the Hebrew idiom, makes the construction of the sentence clear, and renders the transposition of the words above mentioned unnecessary. - L.

### Verse 12

**"Let them come"** - Here too a word seems to have been left out of the text. After **חכמיה** chochameycha, thy wise men, two MSS., one ancient, add **יבאו** yibu, let them come; which, if we consider the form and construction of the sentence, has very much the appearance of being genuine: otherwise the connective conjunction at the beginning of the next member is not only superfluous but embarrassing. See also the Version of the Septuagint, in which the same deficiency is manifest.

**Let them tell thee now "And let them declare"** - For **ידעו** yidu, let them know, perhaps we ought to read **יודיעו** yodiu, let them make known. - Secker. The Septuagint and Vulgate favor this reading, **επατωσαν**, let them declare.

### Verse 13

**Are deceived "They have caused," etc.** - The text has **והתעו** vehithu, And they have caused to err. Fifty of Kennicott's MSS., fifty-three of De Rossi's, and one of my own, ancient, thirty-two editions, and the Vulgate and Chaldee. omit the **ו** vau, and.

**Stay "Pillars"** - **פנת** pinnath, to be pointed as plural pinnoth, without doubt. So Grotius, and so the Chaldee.

### Verse 14

**In the midst thereof** - **רבמבק** bekirbam ; so the Septuagint, and perhaps more correctly." - Secker. So likewise the Chaldee.

### Verse 15

**The head or tail, branch or rush** - R. D. Kimchi says, there are some who suppose that these words mean the dragon's head and tail; and refer to all those who are conversant in astronomy, astrology, etc.

## Verse 16

**Shall Egypt be "The Egyptians shall be"** - יהיו yihyu, they shall be, plural, MS. Bodl. Septuagint, and Chaldee. This is not proposed as an emendation, for either form is proper.

## Verse 17

**And the land of Judah** - The threatening hand of God will be held out and shaken over Egypt, from the side of Judea; through which the Assyrians will march to invade it. It signifies that kind of terror that drives one to his wit's end, that causes him to reel like a drunken man, to be giddy through astonishment. Such is the import of חג chag, and חגה chagah . Five MSS. and two editions have חגהlechagah .

## Verse 18

**The city of destruction "The city of the sun"** - עיר ההרס ir hacheres . This passage is attended with much difficulty and obscurity. First, in regard to the true reading. It is well known that Onias applied it to his own views, either to procure from the king of Egypt permission to build his temple in the Hieropolitan Nome, or to gain credit and authority to it when built; from the notion which he industriously propagated, that Isaiah had in this place prophesied of the building of such a temple. He pretended that the very place where it should be built was expressly named by the prophet, עיר ההרס ir hacheres, the city of the sun. This possibly may have been the original reading. The present text has עיר ההרס ir haheres, the city of destruction; which some suppose to have been introduced into the text by the Jews of Palestine afterwards, to express their detestation of the place, being much offended with this schismatical temple in Egypt. Some think the latter to have been the true reading, and that the prophet himself gave this turn to the name out of contempt, and to intimate the demolition of this Hieropolitan temple; which in effect was destroyed by Vespasian's orders, after that of Jerusalem, "*Videtur propheta consulto scripsisse* הרס heres, pro חרס cheres, *ut alibi scribitur* בית און beith aven *pro* בית אל beith El : איש בשת ish bosheth for בעל איש ish baal, etc. Vide Lowth in loc." - Secker. "It seems that the prophet designedly wrote הרס heres, destruction, for חרס cheres, the sun: as elsewhere בית און beith aven, the house of iniquity, is written for בית אל beith El, the house of God; איש בשת ish bosheth for בעל איש ish baal," etc. But on the supposition that עיר ההרס air haheres is the true reading, others understand it differently. The word הרס heres in Arabic signifies a lion; and Conrad Ikenius has written a dissertation (Dissert. Philol. Theol. XVI.) to prove that the place here mentioned is not Heliopolis, as it is commonly

supposed to be, but Leontopolis in the Heliopolitan Nome, as it is indeed called in the letter, whether real or pretended, of Onias to Ptolemy, which Josephus has inserted in his Jewish Antiquities, lib. 13 c. 3. And I find that several persons of great learning and judgment think that Ikenius has proved the point beyond contradiction. See Christian. Muller. Satura Observ. Philolog. Michaelis Bibliothque Oriental, Part v., p. 171. But, after all, I believe that neither Onias, Heliopolis, nor Leontopolis has any thing to do with this subject. The application of this place of Isaiah to Onias's purpose seems to have been a mere invention, and in consequence of it there may perhaps have been some unfair management to accommodate the text to that purpose; which has been carried even farther than the Hebrew text; for the Greek version has here been either translated from a corrupted text, or wilfully mistranslated or corrupted, to serve the same cause. The place is there called *πολις Ασεδεκ*, the city of righteousness; a name apparently contrived by Onias's party to give credit to their temple, which was to rival that of Jerusalem. Upon the whole, the true reading of the Hebrew text in this place is very uncertain; fifteen MSS. and seven editions have *חֶרֶס* cheres, the city of Hacheres, or, of the sun. So likewise Symmachus, the Vulgate, Arabic, Septuagint, and Complutensian. On the other hand, Aquila, Theodotion, and the Syriac read *חֶרֶס* heres, destruction; the Chaldee paraphrase takes in both readings.

The reading of the text being so uncertain, no one can pretend to determine what the city was that is here mentioned by name; much less to determine what the four other cities were which the prophet does not name. I take the whole passage from the 18th verse to the end of the chapter, to contain a general intimation of the future propagation of the knowledge of the true God in Egypt and Syria, under the successors of Alexander; and, in consequence of this propagation, of the early reception of the Gospel in the same countries, when it should be published to the world. See more on this subject in Prideaux's Connect. An. 145; Dr. Owen's Inquiry into the present state of the Septuagint Version, p. 41; and Bryant's Observations on Ancient History, p. 124. - L.

## Verse 19

**An altar to the Lord** - *צבאות* tsebaoth, "of hosts," or Yehovah tsebaoth, is added by eight MSS. of good repute, and the Syriac Version.

## Verse 23

**Shall there be a highway** - Under the latter kings of Persia, and under Alexander, Egypt, Judea, and Assyria lived peaceably under the same government, and were on such friendly terms that there was a regular,

uninterrupted intercourse between them, so that the Assyrian came into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and Israel became the third, i.e., was in strict union with the other two; and was a blessing to both, as affording them some knowledge of the true God, Isaiah 19:24.

## **Verse 25**

**Blessed be Egypt - Assyria - and Israel -** All these countries shall be converted to the Lord. Concerning Egypt, it was said, Isaiah 18:7, that it should bring gifts to the Lord at Jerusalem. Here it is predicted, Isaiah 19:19, that there shall be an altar to the Lord in Egypt itself; and that they, with the Assyrians shall become the people of God with the Israelites. This remains partly to be fulfilled. These countries shall be all, and perhaps at no very distant time from this, converted to the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Chapter 20**

### **Introduction**

The Prophet Isaiah a sign to Egypt and Cush or Ethiopia, that the captives and exiles of these countries shall be indignantly treated by the king of Assyria, Isaiah 20:1-6.

Tartan besieged Ashdod or Azotus, which probably belonged at this time to Hezekiah's dominions; see 2 Kings 18:8. The people expected to be relieved by the Cushites of Arabia and by the Egyptians. Isaiah was ordered to go uncovered, that is, without his upper garment, the rough mantle commonly worn by the prophets, (see Zechariah 13:4;), probably three days to show that within three years the town should be taken, after the defeat of the Cushites and Egyptians by the king of Assyria, which event should make their case desperate, and induce them to surrender. Azotus was a strong place; it afterwards held out twenty-nine years against Psammitichus, king of Egypt, Herod. 2:157. Tartan was one of Sennacherib's generals, 2 Kings 18:17, and Tirhakah, king of the Cushites, was in alliance with the king of Egypt against Sennacherib. These circumstances make it probable that by Sargon is meant Sennacherib. It might be one of the seven names by which Jerome, on this place, says he was called. He is called Sacherdonus and Sacherdan in the book of Tobit. The taking of Azotus must have happened before Sennacherib's attempt on Jerusalem; when he boasted of his late conquests, Isaiah 37:25. And the warning of the prophet had a principal respect to the Jews also, who were too much inclined to depend upon the assistance of Egypt. As to the rest history and chronology affording us no light, it may be impossible to clear either this or any other hypothesis, which

takes Sargon to be Shalmaneser or Asarhaddon, etc., from all difficulties. - L. Kimchi says, this happened in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah.

## Verse 2

**Walking naked and barefoot** - It is not probable that the prophet walked uncovered and barefoot for three years; his appearing in that manner was a sign that within three years the Egyptians and Cushites should be in the same condition, being conquered and made captives by the king of Assyria. The time was denoted as well as the event; but his appearing in that manner for three whole years could give no premonition of the time at all. It is probable, therefore, that the prophet was ordered to walk so for three days to denote the accomplishment of the event in three years; a day for a year, according to the prophetic rule, Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6. The words שלש ימים shalosh yamim, three days, may possibly have been lost out of the text, at the end of the second verse, after יחף yacheph, barefoot; or after the same word in the third verse, where, in the Alexandrine and Vatican copies of the Septuagint, and in MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2 the words τρια ετη, three years, are twice expressed. Perhaps, instead of שלש ימים shalosh yamim, three days, the Greek translator might read שלש שנים shalosh shanim, three years, by his own mistake, or by that of his copy, after יחף yacheph in the third verse, for which stands the first τρια ετη, three years, in the Alexandrine and Vatican Septuagint, and in the two MSS. above mentioned. It is most likely that Isaiah's walking naked and barefoot was done in a vision; as was probably that of the Prophet Hosea taking a wife of whoredoms. None of these things can well be taken literally.

**From thy foot** - רגליך ragleycha, thy feet, is the reading of thirty-four of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., four ancient editions, with the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic.

## Chapter 21

### 21. The judgment of Babylon, Edom, Arabia

#### Introduction

Prediction of the taking of Babylon by the Medes and Persians at the time of a great festival, Isaiah 21:1-9. Short application of the prophecy to the Jews, partly in the person of God, and partly in his own, Isaiah 21:10. Obscure prophecy respecting Dumah, Isaiah 21:11, Isaiah 21:12. Prophecy concerning the Arabians to be fulfilled in a very short time after its delivery, Isaiah 21:13-17.



The first ten verses of this chapter contain a prediction of the taking of Babylon by the Medes and Persians. It is a passage singular in its kind for its brevity and force, for the variety and rapidity of the movements, and for the strength and energy of coloring with which the action and event are painted. It opens with the prophet's seeing at a distance the dreadful storm that is gathering and ready to burst upon Babylon. The event is intimated in general terms, and God's orders are issued to the Persians and Medes to set forth upon the expedition which he has given them in charge. Upon this the prophet enters into the midst of the action; and in the person of Babylon expresses, in the strongest terms, the astonishment and horror that seizes her on the sudden surprise of the city at the very season dedicated to pleasure and festivity, Isaiah 21:3, Isaiah 21:4. Then, in his own person, describes the situation of things there, the security of the Babylonians, and in the midst of their feasting the sudden alarm of war, Isaiah 21:5. The event is then declared in a very singular manner. God orders the prophet to set a watchman to look out, and to report what he sees; he sees two companies marching onward, representing by their appearance the two nations that were to execute God's orders, who declare that Babylon is fallen, Isaiah 21:6-9.

But what is this to the prophet, and to the Jews, the object of his ministry? The application, the end, and design of the prophecy are admirably given in a short, expressive address to the Jews, partly in the person of God, partly in that of the prophet: "O my threshing" "O my people, whom for your punishment I shall make subject to the Babylonians, to try and to prove you, and to separate the chaff from the corn, the bad from the good, among you; hear this for your consolation: your punishment, your slavery, and oppression will have an end in the destruction of your oppressors." - L.

## **Verses 1-10. The judgment of the desert by the sea**

### **Verse 1**

**The desert of the sea** - This plainly means Babylon, which is the subject of the prophecy. The country about Babylon, and especially below it towards the sea, was a great flat morass, overflowed by the Euphrates and Tigris. It became habitable by being drained by the many canals that were made in it.

Herodotus, lib. 1:184, says that "Semiramis confined the Euphrates within its channel by raising great dams against it; for before it overflowed the whole country like a sea." And Abydenus, (quoting Megasthenes, apud Euseb. Praep. Evang. 9:41), speaking of the building of Babylon by Nebuchadonosor, says, "it is reported that all this part was covered with water and was called the sea; and

that Belus drew off the waters, conveying them into proper receptacles, and surrounded Babylon with a wall." When the Euphrates was turned out of its channel by Cyrus, it was suffered still to drown the neighboring country; and, the Persian government, which did not favor the place, taking no care to remedy this inconvenience, it became in time a great barren morassy desert, which event the title of the prophecy may perhaps intimate. Such it was originally; such it became after the taking of the city by Cyrus; and such it continues to this day.

**As whirlwinds in the south "Like the southern tempests"** - The most vehement storms to which Judea was subject came from the desert country to the south of it. "Out of the south cometh the whirlwind," Job 37:9. "And there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house," Job 1:19. For the situation of Idumea, the country (as I suppose) of Job, see Lamentations 4:21; compared with Job 1:1, was the same in this respect with that of Judea: -

"And Jehovah shall appear over them,

And his arrow shall go forth as the lightning;

And the Lord Jehovah shall sound the trumpet;

And shall march in the whirlwinds of the south."

Zechariah 9:14.

## Verse 2

**The treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth "The plunderer is plundered, and the destroyer is destroyed"** - בוגד והשודד שודד habbaged boged vehashshoded shoded . The MSS. vary in expressing or omitting the ם vau, in these four words. Ten MSS. of Kennicott are without the ם vau in the second word, and eight MSS. are without the ם vau in the fourth word; which justifies Symmachus, who has rendered them passively: ὁ αθετων αθετεται και ὁ τालαιπωριζων τालαιπωρει . He read בגוד שודד bagud shadud . Cocceius (Lexicon in voce) observes that the Chaldee very often renders the verb בגד bagad, by בזז bazaz, he spoiled; and in this place, and in Isaiah 33:1, by the equivalent word אנס anas, to press, give trouble; and in Isaiah 24:16; both by אנס anas and בזז bazaz ; and the Syriac in this place renders it by טלם talam, he oppressed.

**All the sighing thereof have I made to cease "I have put an end to all her vexations"** - Hebrews "Her sighing; that is, the sighing caused by her." So

Kimchi on the place: "It means those who groaned through fear of him: for the suffixes of the nouns refer both to the agent and the patient. All those who groaned before the face of the king of Babylon he caused to rest;" Chald. And so likewise Ephrem Syr. in loc., edit. Assemani: "His groans, viz., the grief and tears which the Chaldeans occasioned through the rest of the nations."

## Verse 5

**Prepare the table "The table is prepared"** - In Hebrew the verbs are in the infinitive mood absolute, as in Ezekiel 1:14; : "And the animals ran and returned, רצוּ וָשׁוּב ratso veshob, like the appearance of the lightning;" just as the Latins say, *currere et reverti*, for *currebant et revertebantur*. See Isaiah 33:11; (note), and the note there.

**Arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield** - Kimchi observes that several of the rabbins understood this of Belshazzar's impious feast and death. The king of a people is termed the shield, because he is their defense. The command, Anoint the shield, is the same with Anoint a new king. Belshazzar being now suddenly slain, while they were all eating and drinking, he advises the princes, whose business it was, to make speed and anoint another in his stead.

## Verse 7

**And he saw a chariot, etc. "And he saw a chariot with two riders; a rider on an ass, a rider on a camel"** - This passage is extremely obscure from the ambiguity of the term רֶכֶב *recheb*, which is used three times, and which signifies a chariot, or any other vehicle, or the rider in it; or a rider on a horse, or any other animal; or a company of chariots, or riders. The prophet may possibly mean a cavalry in two parts, with two sorts of riders; riders on asses or mules, and riders on camels; or led on by two riders, one on an ass, and one on a camel. However, so far it is pretty clear, that Darius and Cyrus, the Medes and the Persians, are intended to be distinguished by the two riders on the two sorts of cattle. It appears from Herodotus, 1:80, that the baggage of Cyrus' army was carried on camels. In his engagement with Croesus, he took off the baggage from the camels, and mounted his horsemen upon them; the enemy's horses, offended with the smell of the camels, turned back and fled. - L.

## Verse 8

**And he cried, A lion "He that looked out on the watch"** - The present reading, אַרְיָה *aryeh*, a lion, is so unintelligible, and the mistake so obvious, that I make no doubt that the true reading is הָרֹאֶה *haroe'h*, the seer; as the Syriac

translator manifestly found it in his copy, who renders it by דקן duka, a watchman.

## Verse 9

**Here cometh a chariot of men, etc. "A man, one of the two riders"** - So the Syriac understands it, and Ephrem Syr.

## Verse 10

**O my threshing** - "O thou, the object upon which I shall exercise the severity of my discipline; that shalt lie under my afflicting hand, like corn spread upon the floor to be threshed out and winnowed, to separate the chaff from the wheat!" The image of threshing is frequently used by the Hebrew poets, with great elegance and force, to express the punishment of the wicked and the trial of the good, or the utter dispersion and destruction of God's enemies. Of the different ways of threshing in use among the Hebrews, and the manner of performing them, see the note on Isaiah 28:27; (note).

Our translators have taken the liberty of using the word threshing in a passive sense, to express the object or matter that is threshed; in which I have followed them, not being able to express it more properly, without departing too much from the form and letter of the original. "Son of my floor," Hebrews It is an idiom of the Hebrew language to call the effect, the object, the adjunct, any thing that belongs in almost any way to another, the son of it. "O my threshing." The prophet abruptly breaks off the speech of God; and instead of continuing it in the form in which he had begun, and in the person of God, "This I declare unto you by my prophet," he changes the form of address, and adds, in his own person, "This I declare unto you from God."

## Verses 11-12. The judgment of Edom

### Verse 11

**The burden of Dumah "The oracle concerning Dumah"** - Pro דומה Dumah, Codex R. Meiri *habet* אדום Edom ; and so the Septuagint, Vid. Kimchi ad h. 50. Biblia Michaelis, Halae, 1720, not. ad 50. See also De Rossi. Bishop Lowth translates the prophecy thus: -

11. The Oracle Concerning Dumah.

A voice crieth to me from Seir:

Watchman, what from the night?

Watchman, what from the night?

12. The watchman replieth: -

The morning cometh, and also the night.

If ye will inquire, inquire ye: come again.

This differs very little from our common Version. One of Kennicott's MSS., and one of my own, omit the repetition, "Watchman, what from the night?"

This prophecy, from the uncertainty of the occasion on which it was uttered, and from the brevity of the expression, is extremely obscure. The Edomites as well as the Jews were subdued by the Babylonians. They inquire of the prophet how long their subjection is to last: he intimates that the Jews should be delivered from their captivity; not so the Edomites. Thus far the interpretation seems to carry with it some degree of probability. What the meaning of the last line may be, I cannot pretend to divine. In this difficulty the Hebrew MSS. give no assistance. The MSS. of the Septuagint, and the fragments of the other Greek Versions, give some variations, but no light. This being the case, I thought it best to give an exact literal translation of the whole two verses, which may serve to enable the English reader to judge in some measure of the foundation of the various interpretations that have been given of them.

The burden of Dumah. - R. D. Kimchi says, "His father understood this of the destruction of Dumah (one of the cities of the Ishmaelites) by the inhabitants of Seir; and that they inquired of the prophet to know the particular time in which God had given them a commission against it. The prophet answered: The morning - the time of success to you, cometh, is just at hand; and the night - the time of utter destruction to the inhabitants of Dumah, is also ready." I have heard the words applied in the way of general exhortation.

1. Every minister of God is a watchman. He is continually watching for the safety and interests of his people, and looking for the counsel of God that he may be properly qualified to warn and to comfort.
- Such are often called to denounce heavy judgments; they have the burden of the word of the Lord to denounce against the impenitent, the backslider, the lukewarm, and the careless.

- When the watchman threatens judgments, some are awakened, and some mock: Watchman, what of the night? "What are the judgments thou threatenest, and when are they to take place?"
- To this question, whether seriously or tauntingly proposed, the watchman answers: 1. The morning cometh - there is a time of repentance granted; a morning of God's long-suffering kindness now appears: and also the night - the time in which God will no longer wait to be gracious, but will cut you off as cumberers of the ground.

2. But if you will inquire seriously how you are to escape God's judgments, inquire ye.

3. There is still a door of hope; continue to pray for mercy.

4. Return from your iniquities.

5. Come to God, through Christ, that ye may obtain salvation.

### **Verses 13-17. The judgment of Arabia**

#### **Verse 13**

**The burden upon Arabia "The oracle concerning Arabia"** - This title is of doubtful authority. In the first place, because it is not in many of the MSS. of the Septuagint; it is in MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2. only, as far as I can find with certainty. Secondly, from the singularity of the phraseology; for מֶשָׁא massa is generally prefixed to its object without a preposition, as מֶשָׁא בָּבֶל massa babel ; and never but in this place with the preposition בְּ beth . Besides, as the word בַּעֲרָב baarab occurs at the very beginning of the prophecy itself, the first word but one, it is much to be suspected that some one, taking it for a proper name and the object of the prophecy, might note it as such by the words מֶשָׁא בַּעֲרָב massa baarab written in the margin, which he might easily transfer to the text. The Septuagint did not take it for a proper name, but render it ἐν τῷ ὄρεϊ ἐσπερας, "in the forest, in the evening," and so the Chaldee, which I follow; for otherwise, the forest in Arabia is so indeterminate and vague a description, that in effect it means nothing at all. This observation might have been of good use in clearing up the foregoing very obscure prophecy, if any light had arisen from joining the two together by removing the separating title; but I see no connection between them. The Arabic Version has, "The prophecy concerning the Arabians, and the children of Chedar."

This prophecy was to have been fulfilled within a year of the time of its delivery, see Isaiah 21:16; and it was probably delivered about the same time with the rest in this part of the book, that is, soon before or after the 14th of Hezekiah, the year of Sennacherib's invasion. In his first march into Judea, or in his return from the Egyptian expedition, he might perhaps overrun these several clans of Arabians; their distress on some such occasion is the subject of this prophecy.

#### Verse 14

**The land of Tema "The southern country"** - Θαιμαν, Sept.; Austri, Vulg. They read תִּמָּן teiman, which seems to be right; for probably the inhabitants of Tema might be involved in the same calamity with their brethren and neighbors of Kedar, and not in a condition to give them assistance, and to relieve them, in their flight before the enemy, with bread and water. To bring forth bread and water is an instance of common humanity in such cases of distress; especially in those desert countries in which the common necessities of life, more particularly water, are not easily to be met with or procured. Moses forbids the Ammonite and Moabite to be admitted into the congregation of the Lord to the tenth generation. One reason which he gives for this reprobation is their omission of the common offices of humanity towards the Israelites; "because they met them not with bread and water in the way, when they came forth out of Egypt," Deuteronomy 23:4.

#### Verse 17

**The archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar "The mighty bowmen of the sons of Kedar"** - *Sagittariorum fortium*, Vulg.; transposing the two words, and reading גִּבּוֹרֵי קֶשֶׁת gibborey kesheth ; which seems to be right. The strong men of the bow, the most excellent archers.

**For the Lord - hath spoken it "For Jehovah hath spoken it"** - The prophetic Carmina of Marcius, foretelling the battle of Cannae, lib. 25:12, conclude with the same kind of solemn form: *Nam mihi ita Jupiter fatus est*; "Thus hath Jupiter spoken to me." Observe that the word נָאֻם naam, to pronounce, to declare, is the solemn word appropriated to the delivering of prophecies: "Behold, I am against the prophets, saith (נָאֻם naam, pronounceth) Jehovah, who use their tongues, נֹאֲמֵי וַיִּינָאֻמוּ vaiyinamu neum, and solemnly pronounce, He hath pronounced it;" Jeremiah 23:31. What God says shall most assuredly come to pass; he cannot be deceived.



## Chapter 22

### 22. Judgment upon Jerusalem

#### Introduction

Prophecy concerning Jerusalem, Isaiah 22:1-14. Sentence against Shebna, who was over the household, Isaiah 22:15-19. Prophecy concerning Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, Isaiah 22:20, Isaiah 22:21. From Eliakim, Isaiah, (agreeably to the mode universally adopted in the prophetic writings, of making the things then present, or which were shortly to be accomplished, types or representations of things to be fulfilled upon a larger scale in distant futurity), makes a transition to the Messiah, of whom Eliakim was a type, to whom the words will best apply, and to whom some passages in the prophecy must be solely restrained, Isaiah 22:20-24. The sentence against Shebna again confirmed, Isaiah 22:25.

This prophecy, ending with the fourteenth verse of this chapter, is entitled, "The oracle concerning the valley of vision," by which is meant Jerusalem, because, says Sal. ben Melech, it was the place of prophecy. Jerusalem, according to Josephus, was built upon two opposite hills Sion and Acra, separated by a valley in the midst. He speaks of another broad valley between Acra and Moriah, Bell. Jud. 5:13; 6:6. It was the seat of Divine revelation; the place where chiefly prophetic vision was given, and where God manifested himself visibly in the holy place. The prophecy foretells the invasion of Jerusalem by the Assyrians under Sennacherib; or by the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar. Vitringa is of opinion that the prophet has both in view: that of the Chaldeans in the first part, Isaiah 22:1-5, which he thinks relates to the flight of Zedekiah, 2 Kings 25:4, 2 Kings 25:5; and that of the Assyrians in the latter part, which agrees with the circumstances of that time, and particularly describes the preparations made by Hezekiah for the defense of the city, Isaiah 22:8-11. Compare 2 Chronicles 32:2-5.

#### Verse 1

**Art - gone up to the house-tops "Are gone up to the house-tops"** - The houses in the east were in ancient times, as they are still, generally, built in one and the same uniform manner. The roof or top of the house is always flat, covered with broad stones, or a strong plaster of terrace, and guarded on every side with a low parapet wall; see Deuteronomy 22:8. The terrace is frequented as much as any part of the house. On this, as the season favors, they walk, they eat, they sleep, they transact business, ( 1 Samuel 9:25, see also the Septuagint in that place), they perform their devotions Acts 10:9. The house is built with a

court within, into which chiefly the windows open: those that open to the street are so obstructed with lattice-work that no one either without or within can see through them. Whenever, therefore, any thing is to be seen or heard in the streets, any public spectacle, any alarm of a public nature, every one immediately goes up to the house-top to satisfy his curiosity. In the same manner, when any one has occasion to make any thing public, the readiest and most effectual way of doing it is to proclaim it from the house-tops to the people in the streets. "What ye hear in the ear, that publish ye on the house-top," saith our Savior, Matthew 10:27. The people running all to the tops of their houses gives a lively image of a sudden general alarm. Sir John Chardin's MS. note on this place is as follows: "*Dans les festes pour voir passer quelque chose, et dans les maladies pour les annoncer aux voisins en allumant des lumieres, le peuple monte sur les terrasses.*" "In festivals, in order to see what is going forward, and in times of sickness, in order to indicate them to neighbors by lighting of candles, the people go up to the house-tops."

### Verse 3

**All thy rulers - are bound by the archers "All thy leaders - are fled from the bow"** - There seems to be somewhat of an inconsistency in the sense according to the present reading. If the leaders were bound, אסרו usseru, how could they flee away? for their being bound, according to the obvious construction and course of the sentence, is a circumstance prior to their flight. I therefore follow Houbigant, who reads הסרו huseru, *remoti sunt*, "they are gone off." גלו galu, *transmigraverunt*, Chaldee; which seems to confirm this emendation.

### Verse 6

**Chariots of men "The Syriac"** - It is not easy to say what רכב אדם recheb adam, a chariot of men, can mean. It seems by the form of the sentence, which consists of three members, the first and the third mentioning a particular people, that the second should do so likewise. Thus ברכב ארם ופרשים berecheb aram uparashim, "with chariots the Syrian, and with horsemen:" the similitude of the letters ד daleth and ר resh is so great, and the mistakes arising from it are so frequent, that I readily adopt the correction of Houbigant, ארם aram, Syria, instead of אדם adam, man; which seems to me extremely probable. The conjunction ו vau, and, prefixed to פרשים parashim, horsemen, seems necessary in whatever way the sentence may be taken; and it is confirmed by five MSS., (one ancient), four of De Rossi's, and two ancient of my own; one by correction of Dr. Kennicott's, and three editions. Kir was a city belonging to the Medes. The Medes were subject to the Assyrians in Hezekiah's time, (see 2 Kings 16:9,

and 2 Kings 17:6); and so perhaps might Elam (the Persians) likewise be, or auxiliaries to them.

### **Verse 8**

**The armor "The arsenal"** - Built by Solomon within the city, and called the house of the forest of Lebanon; probably from the great quantity of cedar from Lebanon which was employed in the building. See 1 Kings 7:2, 1 Kings 7:3.

### **Verse 9**

**Ye gathered together the waters "And ye shall collect the waters"** - There were two pools in or near Jerusalem, supplied by springs: the upper pool, or the old pool, supplied by the spring called Gihon, 2 Chronicles 32:30, towards the higher part of the city, near Sion, or the city of David, and the lower pool, probably supplied by Siloam, towards the lower part. When Hezekiah was threatened with a siege by Sennacherib, he stopped up all the waters of the fountains without the city; and brought them into the city by a conduit, or subterranean passage cut through the rock; those of the old pool, to the place where he had a double wall, so that the pool was between the two walls. This he did in order to distress the enemy, and to supply the city during the siege. This was so great a work that not only the historians have made particular mention of it, 2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:2, 2 Chronicles 32:3, 2 Chronicles 32:5, 2 Chronicles 32:30; but the son of Sirach also has celebrated it in his encomium on Hezekiah. "Hezekiah fortified his city, and brought in water into the midst thereof: he digged the hard rock with iron, and made wells for water," Ecclesiasticus 48.

### **Verse 11**

**Unto the maker thereof "To him that hath disposed this"** - That is, to God the Author and Disposer of this visitation, the invasion with which he now threatens you. The very same expressions are applied to God, and upon the same occasion, Isaiah 37:26; :-

"Hast thou not heard of old, that I have disposed it;

And of ancient times, that I have formed it?"

### Verse 13

**Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die** - This has been the language of all those who have sought their portion in this life, since the foundation of the world. So the poet: -

*Heu, heu nos miserif quam totus homuncio nil est!*

*Sic erimus cuncti, postquam nos auferet orcus.*

*Ergo vivamus, dum licet esse, bene.*

Alas alas! what miserable creatures are we, only the semblances of men! And so shall we be all when we come to die. Therefore let us live joyfully while we may.

Domitian had an image of death hung up in his dining-room, to show his guests that as life was uncertain, they should make the best of it by indulging themselves. On this Martial, to flatter the emperor, whom he styles god, wrote the following epigram: -

*Frangere thoros, pete vina, tingere nardo.*

*Ipse jubet mortis te meminisse Deus.*

Sit down to table - drink heartily - anoint thyself with spikenard; for God himself commands thee to remember death.

So the adage: -

*Ede, bibe, lude*

*post mortem nulla voluptas.*

"Eat, drink, and play, while here ye may:

No revelry after your dying day."

St. Paul quotes the same heathen sentiment, 1 Corinthians 15:32; : "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Anacreon is full in point, and from him nothing better can be expected: -

Ὡς οὖν ἐτ' εὐδι' ἐστίν,-144 Καὶ πινε καὶ κυβεύε Καὶ σπένδε τῷ Λυαίῳ· Μὴ νοῦσος, ἣν τις ἐλθῇ, Λεγῇ, σὲ μὴ δεῖ πίνειν.

*Anac. Od. xv., 50:11.*

"While no tempest blots your sky,  
Drink, and throw the sportful dye:  
But to Bacchus drench the ground,  
Ere you push the goblet round;  
Lest some fatal illness cry,  
'Drink no more the cup of joy.'"

Addison.

#### **Verse 14**

**It was revealed in mine ears "The voice of Jehovah"** - The Vulgate has *vox Domini*; as if in his copy he had read קול יהוה kol Yehovah ; and in truth, without the word קול kol, voice, it is not easy to make out the sense of the passage; as appears from the strange versions which the rest of the ancients, (except the Chaldee), and many of the moderns, have given of it; as if the matter were revealed in or to the ears of Jehovah: εν τω αυτη Κυτου, in the ears of the Lord, Septuagint. Vitringa translates it, *Revelatus est in auribus meis Jehovah*, "Jehovah hath revealed it in mine ears," and refers to 1 Samuel 2:27; 1 Samuel 3:21; : but the construction in those places is different, and there is no speech of God added; which here seems to want something more than the verb נגלה nigleh to introduce it. Compare Isaiah 5:9, where the text is still more imperfect.

**The Lord God of hosts** - אדני יהוה צבאות Adonai Yehovah tsebaoth . But אדני Adonai, Lord, is omitted by two of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., and by two of my own; by three editions, and the Septuagint, Syriac and Arabic.

#### **Verse 15**

**Go - unto Shebna** - The following prophecy concerning Shebna seems to have very little relation to the foregoing, except that it might have been delivered about the same time; and Shebna might be a principal person among those whose luxury and profaneness is severely reprehended by the prophet in the conclusion of that prophecy, Isaiah 22:11-14.

Shebna the scribe, mentioned in the history of Hezekiah, chap. 36, seems to have been a different person from this Shebna, the treasurer or steward of the household, to whom this prophecy relates. The Eliakim here mentioned was probably the person who, at the time of Sennacherib's invasion, was actually treasurer, the son of Hilkiah. If so, this prophecy was delivered, as the preceding, (which makes the former part of the chapter), plainly was, some time before the invasion of Sennacherib. As to the rest, history affords us no information.

**"And say unto him"** - Here are two words lost out of the text, which are supplied by two of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., one ancient, which read ואמרת אליו veamarta elai, and thou shalt say unto him; by the Septuagint, καὶ εἶπὸν αὐτῷ, and in the same manner by all the ancient versions. It is to be observed that this passage is merely historical, and does not admit of that sort of ellipsis by which in the poetical parts a person is frequently introduced speaking, without the usual notice, that what follows was delivered by him.

## Verse 16

**A sepulcher on high - in a rock** - It has been observed before, on Isaiah 14, that persons of high rank in Judea, and in most parts of the east, were generally buried in large sepulchral vaults, hewn out in the rock for the use of themselves and their families. The vanity of Shebna is set forth by his being so studious and careful to have his sepulcher on high - in a lofty vault; and that probably in a high situation, that it might be more conspicuous. Hezekiah was buried, למעלה lemalah, ἐν ἀναβασει, Sept.: in the chiefest, says our translation; rather, in the highest part of the sepulchres of the sons of David, to do him the more honor, 2 Chronicles 32:33. There are some monuments still remaining in Persia of great antiquity, called Naksi Rustam, which give one a clear idea of Shebna's pompous design for his sepulcher. They consist of several sepulchers, each of them hewn in a high rock near the top; the front of the rock to the valley below is adorned with carved work in relievo, being the outside of the sepulcher. Some of these sepulchers are about thirty feet in the perpendicular from the valley, which is itself perhaps raised above half as much by the accumulation of the earth since they were made. See the description of them in Chardin, Pietro della Valle, Thevenot, and Kempfer. Diodorus Siculus, lib. 17, mentions these ancient monuments, and calls them the sepulchres of the kings of Persia. - L.

## Verse 17

**Cover thee** - That is, thy face. This was the condition of mourners in general, and particularly of condemned persons. See Esther 6:12; Esther 7:8.

## Verse 19

**I will drive thee** - אֶהְרֵסְךָ ehersecha, in the first person, Syr. Vulg.

## Verse 21

**To the inhabitants** - לְיוֹשְׁבֵי leyoshebey, in the plural number, four of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., (two ancient), and two of De Rossi's, with the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

## Verse 22

**And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder** - As the robe and the baldric, mentioned in the preceding verse, were the ensigns of power and authority, so likewise was the key the mark of office, either sacred or civil. The priestess of Juno is said to be the key-bearer of the goddess, κλειδουχος Ἡρας; Aeschyl. Suppl. 299. A female high in office under a great queen has the same title: -

Καλλιθοη κλειδουχος Ολυμπιαδος βασιλειης.

"Callithoe was the key-bearer of the Olympian queen."

Auctor Phoronidis ap. Clem. Alex. p. 418, edit. Potter. This mark of office was likewise among the Greeks, as here in Isaiah, borne on the shoulder; the priestess of Ceres, κατωμαδιαν εχε κλαιδα, had the key on her shoulder. Callim. Ceres, verse 45. To comprehend how the key could be borne on the shoulder, it will be necessary to say something of the form of it: but without entering into a long disquisition, and a great deal of obscure learning, concerning the locks and keys of the ancients, it will be sufficient to observe, that one sort of keys, and that probably the most ancient, was of considerable magnitude, and as to the shape, very much bent and crooked. Aratus, to give his reader an idea of the form of the constellation Cassiopeia, compares it to a key. It must be owned that the passage is very obscure; but the learned Huetius has bestowed a great deal of pains in explaining it, Animadvers. in Manilii, lib. 1:355; and I think has succeeded very well in it. Homer Odys. describes the key of Ulysses' storehouse as ευκαμπης, of a large curvature; which Eustathius explains by saying it was δρεπανοειδης, in shape like a reaphook. Huetius says the constellation Cassiopeia answers to this description; the stars to the north making the curve part, that is, the principal part of the key; the southern stars,



the handle. The curve part was introduced into the key-hole; and, being properly directed by the handle, took hold of the bolts within, and moved them from their places. We may easily collect from this account, that such a key would lie very well upon the shoulder; that it must be of some considerable size and weight, and could hardly be commodiously carried otherwise. Ulysses' key was of brass, and the handle of ivory: but this was a royal key. The more common ones were probably of wood. In Egypt they have no other than wooden locks and keys to this day; even the gates of Cairo have no better. Baumgarten, Peregr. 1:18. Thevenot, part ii., chap. 10. But was it not the representation of a key, either cut out in cloth and sewed on the shoulder of the garment, or embroidered on that part of the garment itself? The idea of a huge key of a gate, in any kind of metal, laid across the shoulder, is to me very ridiculous.

In allusion to the image of the key as the ensign of power, the unlimited extent of that power is expressed with great clearness as well as force by the sole and exclusive authority to open and shut. Our Savior, therefore, has upon a similar occasion made use of a like manner of expression, Matthew 16:19; and in Revelation 3:7; has applied to himself the very words of the prophet.

### **Verse 23**

**A nail** - In ancient times, and in the eastern countries, as the way of life, so the houses, were much more simple than ours at present. They had not that quantity and variety of furniture, nor those accommodations of all sorts, with which we abound. It was convenient and even necessary for them, and it made an essential part in the building of a house, to furnish the inside of the several apartments with sets of spikes, nails, or large pegs, upon which to dispose of and hang up the several movables and utensils in common use, and proper to the apartment. These spikes they worked into the walls at the first erection of them, the walls being of such materials that they could not bear their being driven in afterwards; and they were contrived so as to strengthen the walls by binding the parts together, as well as to serve for convenience. Sir John Chardin's account of this matter is this: "They do not drive with a hammer the nails that are put into the eastern walls. The walls are too hard, being of brick; or, if they are of clay, too moldering: but they fix them in the brick-work as they are building. They are large nails, with square heads like dice, well made, the ends being bent so as to make them cramp-irons. They commonly place them at the windows and doors, in order to hang upon them, when they like, veils and curtains." Harmer's Observ. 1 p. 191. And we may add, that they were put in other places too, in order to hang up other things of various kinds; as appears from this place of Isaiah, and from Ezekiel 15:3, who speaks of a pin or nail, "to hang any vessel thereon." The word used here for a nail of this sort is the same by which they

express that instrument, the stake, or large pin of iron, with which they fastened down to the ground the cords of their tents. We see, therefore, that these nails were of necessary and common use, and of no small importance in all their apartments; conspicuous, and much exposed to observation: and if they seem to us mean and insignificant, it is because we are not acquainted with the thing itself, and have no name to express it but by what conveys to us a low and contemptible idea. "Grace hath been showed from the Lord our God," saith Ezra, Ezra 9:8, "to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place:" that is, as the margin of our Bible explains it, "a constant and sure abode."

"He that doth lodge near her (Wisdom's) house,  
Shall also fasten a pin in her walls."

*Ecclus. 14:24.*

The dignity and propriety of the metaphor appears from the Prophet Zechariah's use of it: -

"From him shall be the corner-stone, from him the nail,  
From him the battle-bow,  
From him every ruler together."

*Zechariah 10:4.*

And Mohammed, using the same word, calls Pharaoh the lord or master of the nails, that is, well attended by nobles and officers capable of administering his affairs. Koran, Sur. 38:11, and 89:9. So some understand this passage of the Koran. Mr. Sale seems to prefer another interpretation.

Taylor, in his Concordance, thinks יָתֵד *yathed* means the pillar or post that stands in the middle, and supports the tent, in which such pegs are fixed to hang their arms, etc., upon; referring to Shaw's Travels, p. 287. But יָתֵד *yathed* is never used, as far as appears to me, in that sense. It was indeed necessary that the pillar of the tent should have such pegs on it for that purpose; but the hanging of such things in this manner upon this pillar does not prove that יָתֵד *yathed* was the pillar itself.

**A glorious throne "A glorious seat"** - That is, his father's house and all his own family shall be gloriously seated, shall flourish in honor and prosperity; and shall depend upon him, and be supported by him.

#### **Verse 24**

**All the glory** - One considerable part of the magnificence of the eastern princes consisted in the great quantity of gold and silver vessels which they had for various uses. "Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver; it was nothing accounted of in Solomon's days;" 1 Kings 10:21. "The vessels in the house of the forest of Lebanon," the armory of Jerusalem so called, "were two hundred targets, and three hundred shields of beaten gold." Ibid. 1 Kings 10:16, 1 Kings 10:17. These were ranged in order upon the walls of the armory, (see Song of Solomon 4:4;), upon pins worked into the walls on purpose, as above mentioned. Eliakim is considered as a principal stake of this sort, immovably fastened in the wall for the support of all vessels destined for common or sacred uses; that is, as the principal support of the whole civil and ecclesiastical polity. And the consequence of his continued power will be the promotion and flourishing condition of his family and dependents, from the highest to the lowest.

**Vessels of flagons "Meaner vessels"** - נְבָלִים nebalim seems to mean earthen vessels of common use, brittle, and of little value, (see Lamentations 4:2; Jeremiah 48:12;), in opposition to אֲגָנוֹת aganoth, goblets of gold and silver used in the sacrifices. Exodus 24:6.

#### **Verse 25**

**The nail that is fastened** - This must be understood of Shebna, as a repetition and confirmation of the sentence above denounced against him.

What is said of Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, Isaiah 22:20-24, is very remarkable; and the literal meaning is not easy to be understood. From Isaiah 9:6, and from Revelation 3:7, it seems to belong to our Lord alone. The removal of Shebna from being over the treasure of the Lord's house, Isaiah 22:19, and the investiture of Eliakim with his robe, girdle, office, and government, Isaiah 22:20, etc., probably point out the change of the Jewish priesthood, and the proclaiming of the unchangeable priesthood of Christ. See Psalm 110:4. Eliakim signifies *The resurrection of the Lord*; or, *My God, he shall arise*. Hilkiyah signifies *The Lord my portion or lot*. The key of David, shutting and opening, etc., may intend the way of salvation through Christ alone. For the hope of

salvation and eternal life comes only through Eliakim, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

It is said, Isaiah 22:24, "They shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house" - for, in Jesus Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and the offspring and the issue, **הַצֵּצְאִים** *hatstseetsaim* from **יָצָא** *yatsa*, to go out, - the suckers from the root; the sideshoots, the apostles and primitive ministers of his word. The issue, **הַצִּפְיֹת** *hatstsephioth*, probably means the issue's issue; so the Targum. The grandchildren, all those who believe on the Lord Jesus through their word.

"The nail that is fastened in the sure place shall be removed," Isaiah 22:25, Kimchi refers not to Eliakim, but to Shebna, Isaiah 22:17-19. By, "They shall hang upon him all vessels of small quantity and large quantity," has been understood the dependence of all souls, of all capacities, from the lowest in intellect to the most exalted on the Lord Jesus, as the only Savior of all lost human spirits.

As the literal interpretation of this prophecy has not been found out, we are justified from parallel texts to consider the whole as referring to Jesus Christ, and the government of the Church, and the redemption of the world by him. Nor are there many prophecies which relate to him more clearly than this, taken in the above sense.

## **Chapter 23**

### **23. The judgment of Tyre**

#### **Introduction**

Prophecy denouncing the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, delivered upwards of one hundred and twenty years before its accomplishment, at a period when the Tyrians were in great prosperity, and the Babylonians in abject subjection to the Assyrian empire; and, consequently, when an event of so great magnitude was improbable in the highest degree, Isaiah 23:1-14. Tyre shall recover its splendor at the termination of seventy years, the days of One king, or kingdom, by which must be meant the time allotted for the duration of the Babylonish empire, as otherwise the prophecy cannot be accommodated to the event, Isaiah 23:15-17. Supposed reference to the early conversion of Tyre to Christianity, Isaiah 23:18.

## Verse 1

**The burden of Tyre** - Tyre, a city on the coast of Syria, about lat. 32° N. was built two thousand seven hundred and sixty years before Christ. There were two cities of this name; one on the continent, and the other on an island, about half a mile from the shore; the city on the island was about four miles in circumference. Old Tyre resisted Nebuchadnezzar for thirteen years; then the inhabitants carried, so to speak, the city to the forementioned island, Isaiah 23:4. This new city held out against Alexander the Great for seven months; who, in order to take it, was obliged to fill up the channel which separated it from the main land. In a.d. 1289 it was totally destroyed by the sultan of Egypt; and now contains only a few huts, in which about fifty or sixty wretched families exist. This desolation was foretold by this prophet and by Ezekiel, one thousand nine hundred years before it took place!

**Howl, ye ships of Tarshish** - This prophecy denounces the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar. It opens with an address to the Tyrian negotiators and sailors at Tarshish, (Tartessus, in Spain), a place which, in the course of their trade, they greatly frequented. The news of the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar is said to be brought to them from Chittim, the islands and coasts of the Mediterranean; "for the Tyrians," says Jerome on Isaiah 23:6, "when they saw they had no other means of escaping, fled in their ships, and took refuge in Carthage and in the islands of the Ionian and Aegean sea." From whence the news would spread and reach Tarshish; so also Jarchi on the same place. This seems to be the most probable interpretation of this verse.

## Verse 2

**Be still "Be silent"** - Silence is a mark of grief and consternation. See Isaiah 47:5. Jeremiah has finely expressed this image: -

"The elders of the daughter of Zion sit on the ground, they are silent:

They have cast up dust on their heads, they have girded themselves with sackcloth.

The virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground."

Lamentations 2:10.

### Verse 3

**The seed of Sihor "The seed of the Nile"** - The Nile is called here Shichor, as it is Jeremiah 2:18, and 1 Chronicles 13:5. It had this name from the blackness of its waters, charged with the mud which it brings down from Ethiopia when it overflows, *Et viridem Aegyptum nigra fecundat arena*; as it was called by the Greeks Melas, and by the Latins *Melo*, for the same reason. See *Servius* on the above line of Virgil, Georg. 4:291. It was called Siris by the Ethiopians, by some supposed to be the same with Shichor. Egypt by its extraordinary fertility, caused by the overflowing of the Nile supplied the neighboring nations with corn, by which branch of trade the Tyrians gained great wealth.

### Verse 4

**Be thou ashamed, O Zidon** - Tyre is called Isaiah 23:12, the daughter of Sidon. "The Sidonians," says Justin, 18:3, "when their city was taken by the king of Ascalon, betook themselves to their ships, and landed, and built by Tyre." Sidon, as the mother city is supposed to be deeply affected with the calamity of her daughter.

**Nor bring up virgins "Nor educated virgins"** - ורוממתי veromamti ; so an ancient MS. Of Dr. Kennicott's prefixing the ו vau, which refers to the negative preceding, and is equivalent to ולא velo . See Deuteronomy 23:6; Proverbs 30:3. Two of my own MSS. have ו vau in the margin.

### Verse 7

**Whose antiquity is of ancient days "Whose antiquity is of the earliest date"** - Justin, in the passage above quoted, had dated the building of Tyre at a certain number of years before the taking of Troy; but the number is lost in the present copies. Tyre, though not so old as Sidon, was yet of very high antiquity: it was a strong city even in the time of Joshua. It is called עיר מבצר צר ir mibtsar tsor, "the city of the fortress of Sor," Joshua 19:29. Interpreters raise difficulties in regard to this passage, and will not allow it to have been so ancient; with what good reason I do not see, for it is called by the same name, "the fortress of Sor," in the history of David, 2 Samuel 24:7, and the circumstances of the history determine the place to be the very same. See on Isaiah 23:1; (note).

Whose antiquity is of ancient days, may refer to Palaetyrus, or Old Tyre.

**Her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn** - This may belong to the new or insular Tyre; her own feet, that is, her own inhabitants, shall carry her - shall

transport the city, from the continent to the island. "But the text says it shall be carried far off, and the new city was founded only half a mile distant from the other." I answer, מרחוק merachok does not always signify a great distance, but distance or interval in general; for in Joshua 3:4; רחוק rachok is used to express the space between the camp and the ark, which we know to have been only two thousand cubits. Some refer the sojourning afar off to the extent of the commercial voyages undertaken by the Tyrians and their foreign connections.

### Verse 10

**O daughter of Tarshish** - Tyre is called the daughter of Tarshish; perhaps because, Tyre being ruined, Tarshish was become the superior city, and might be considered as the metropolis of the Tyrian people; or rather because of the close connection and perpetual intercourse between them, according to that latitude of signification in which the Hebrews use the words son and daughter to express any sort of conjunction and dependence whatever. מֵזַח mezach, a girdle, which collects, binds, and keeps together the loose raiment, when applied to a river, may mean a mound, mole, or artificial dam, which contains the waters and prevents them from spreading abroad. A city taken by siege and destroyed, whose walls are demolished, whose policy is dissolved, whose wealth is dissipated, whose people is scattered over the wide country, is compared to a river whose banks are broken down, and whose waters, let loose and overflowing all the neighboring plains, are wasted and lost. This may possibly be the meaning of this very obscure verse, of which I can find no other interpretation that is at all satisfactory. - L.

### Verse 13

**Behold the land of the Chaldeans** - This verse is extremely obscure; the obscurity arises from the ambiguity of the agents, which belong to the verbs, and of the objects expressed by the pronouns; from the change of number of the verbs, and of gender in the pronouns. The MSS. give us no assistance, and the ancient Versions very little. The Chaldee and Vulgate read שְׂמוּאֵל samoah, in the plural number. I have followed the interpretation which, among many different ones, seemed to be most probable, that of Perizonius and Vitranga.

The Chaldeans, Chasdim, are supposed to have had their origin, and to have taken their name, from Chesed, the son of Nachor, the brother of Abraham. They were known by that name in the time of Moses, who calls Ur in Mesopotamia, from whence Abraham came, to distinguish it from other places of the same name, Ur of the Chaldeans. And Jeremiah calls them an ancient nation. This is not inconsistent with what Isaiah here says of them: "This people



was not," that is, they were of no account, (see Deuteronomy 32:21;); they were not reckoned among the great and potent nations of the world till of later times; they were a rude, uncivilized, barbarous people, without laws, without settled habitations; wandering in a wide desert country (צִיִּים tsiyim ) and addicted to rapine like the wild Arabians. Such they are represented to have been in the time of Job, Job 1:17, and such they continued to be till Assur, some powerful king of Assyria, gathered them together, and settled them in Babylon in the neighboring country. This probably was Ninus, whom I suppose to have lived in the time of the Judges. In this, with many eminent chronologers, I follow the authority of Herodotus, who says that the Assyrian monarchy lasted but five hundred and twenty years. Ninus got possession of Babylon from the Cuthean Arabians; the successors of Nimrod in that empire collected the Chaldeans, and settled a colony of them there to secure the possession of the city, which he and his successors greatly enlarged and ornamented. They had perhaps been useful to him in his wars, and might be likely to be farther useful in keeping under the old inhabitants of that city, and of the country belonging to it; according to the policy of the Assyrian kings, who generally brought new people into the conquered countries; see Isaiah 36:17; 2 Kings 17:6, 2 Kings 17:24. The testimony of Dicaearchus, a Greek historian contemporary with Alexander, (apud. Steph. de Urbibus, in voc. Χαλδαιος ), in regard to the fact is remarkable, though he is mistaken in the name of the king he speaks of. He says that "a certain king of Assyria, the fourteenth in succession from Ninus, (as he might be, if Ninus is placed, as in the common chronology, eight hundred years higher than we have above set him), named, as it is said, Chaldaeus, having gathered together and united all the people called Chaldeans, built the famous city, Babylon, upon the Euphrates."

#### Verse 14

**Howl, ye shops** - The Prophet Ezekiel hath enlarged upon this part of the same subject with great force and elegance: -

"Thus saith the Lord Jehovah concerning Tyre: -

At the sound of thy fall, at the cry of the wounded,

At the great slaughter in the midst of thee, shall not the islands tremble?

And shall not all the princes of the sea descend from their thrones,

And lay aside their robes, and strip off their embroidered garments?

They shall clothe themselves with trembling, they shall sit on the ground;

They shall tremble every moment, they shall be astonished at thee.

And they shall utter a lamentation over thee, and shall say unto thee:

How art thou lost, thou that wast inhabited from the seas!

The renowned city, that was strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants!

That struck with terror all her neighbors!

Now shall the coasts tremble in the day of thy fall,

And the isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure."

Ezekiel 26:15-18.

### **Verse 15**

**According to the days of one king** - What is, of one kingdom; see Daniel 7:17, Daniel 8:20. Nebuchadnezzar began his conquests in the first year of his reign; from thence to the taking of Babylon by Cyrus are seventy years, at which time the nations subdued by Nebuchadnezzar were to be restored to liberty. These seventy years limit the duration of the Babylonish monarchy. Tyre was taken by him towards the middle of that period; so did not serve the king of Babylon during the whole period, but only for the remaining part of it. This seems to be the meaning of Isaiah; the days allotted to the one king or kingdom, are seventy years; Tyre, with the rest of the conquered nations, shall continue in a state of subjection and desolation to the end of that period. Not from the beginning and through the whole of the period; for, by being one of the latest conquests, the duration of that state of subjection in regard to her, was not much more than half of it. "All these nations," saith Jeremiah, Jeremiah 25:11, "shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years." Some of them were conquered sooner, some later; but the end of this period was the common term for the deliverance of them all.

There is another way of computing the seventy years, from the year in which Tyre was actually taken to the nineteenth of Darius Hystaspis; whom the Phoenicians, or Tyrians, assisted against the Ionians, and probably on that account might then be restored to their former liberties and privileges. But I think the former the more probable interpretation. - L.

**Sing as a harlot** - *Fidicinam esse meretricum est.* says Donatus in Terent. Eunuch. 3:2, 4.

*Nec meretrix tibicina, cujus Ad strepitum salias.*

*Hor. 1:Epist. 14:25.*

"Nor harlot minstrel sings, when the rude sound  
Tempts you with heavy heels to thump the ground."

*Francis.*

Sir John Chardin, in his MS. note on this place, says: -

*C'est que les vieilles prostituees, -*

*ne font que chanter quand les jeunes dancent, et les animer par l'instrument et par la voix.*

"The old prostitutes do nothing but sing, while the young ones dance; and animate them both by vocal and instrumental music."

### **Verse 17**

**After the end of seventy years** - Tyre, after its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, recovered, as it is here foretold, its ancient trade, wealth, and grandeur; as it did likewise after a second destruction by Alexander. It became Christian early with the rest of the neighboring countries. St. Paul himself found many Christians there, Acts 21:4. It suffered much in the Diocletian persecution. It was an archbishopric under the patriarchate of Jerusalem, with fourteen bishoprics under its jurisdiction. It continued Christian till it was taken by the Saracens in 639; was recovered by the Christians in 1124; but in 1280 was conquered by the Mamelukes, and afterwards taken from them by the Turks in 1517. Since that time it has sunk into utter decay; is now a mere ruin, a bare rock, "a place to spread nets upon," as the Prophet Ezekiel foretold it should be, Ezekiel 26:14. See Sandy's Travels; Vitranga on the place; Bp. Newton on the Prophecies, Dissert. xi.

### **Volume IV. Book of judgment and promise, 24:1-27:13**

*These chapters form a continuous prophecy on the subject of judgment in the Day of the Lord with blessing afterward. They are sometimes styled Isaiah's Apocalypse.*

## Chapter 24

### 24. The Day of the Lord and millennial blessing

#### Introduction

Dreadful judgments impending over the people of God, Isaiah 24:1-4. Particular enumeration of the horrid impieties which provoked the Divine vengeance, Isaiah 24:5, Isaiah 24:6. Great political wretchedness of the transgressors, Isaiah 24:7-12. The calamities shall be so great that only a small remnant shall be left in the land, as it were the gleanings of the vintage, Isaiah 24:13. The rest, scattered over the different countries, spread there the knowledge of God, Isaiah 24:14-16. Strong figures by which the great distress and long captivity of the transgressors are set forth, Isaiah 24:17-22. Gracious promise of a redemption from captivity; and of an extension of the kingdom of God in the latter days, attended with such glorious circumstances as totally to eclipse the light and splendor of the previous dispensation, Isaiah 24:23.

From the thirteenth chapter to the twenty-third inclusive, the fate of several cities and nations is denounced: of Babylon, of the Philistines, Moab, Damascus, Egypt, Tyre. After having foretold the destruction of the foreign nations, enemies of Judah, the prophet declares the judgments impending on the people of God themselves for their wickedness and apostasy, and the desolation that shall be brought on their whole country.

The twenty-fourth and the three following chapters seem to have been delivered about the same time: before the destruction of Moab by Shalmaneser; see Isaiah 25:10, consequently, before the destruction of Samaria; probably in the beginning of Hezekiah's reign. But concerning the particular subject of the twenty-fourth chapter interpreters are not at all agreed: some refer it to the desolation caused by the invasion of Shalmaneser; others to the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar; and others to the destruction of the city and nation by the Romans. Vitrina is singular in his opinion, who applies it to the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. Perhaps it may have a view to all of the three great desolations of the country, by Shalmaneser, by Nebuchadnezzar, and by the Romans; especially the last, to which some parts of it may seem more peculiarly applicable. However, the prophet chiefly employs general images; such as set forth the greatness and universality of the ruin and desolation that is to be brought upon the country by these great revolutions, involving all orders and degrees of men, changing entirely the face of things, and destroying the whole polity, both religious and civil; without entering into minute circumstances, or

necessarily restraining it by particular marks to one great event, exclusive of others of the same kind.

## **Verses 1-13. The judgments of the Day of the Lord**

### **Verse 4**

**The world languisheth** - The world is the same with the land; that is, the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, orbis Israeliticus. See note on Isaiah 13:11; (note).

### **Verse 5**

**The laws "The law"** - תורה torah, singular: so read the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee.

### **Verse 6**

**Are burned "Are destroyed"** - For חרו charu, read חרבו charebu . See the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee and Symmachus.

### **Verse 8**

**The mirth, etc.** - שאון sheon, the noise. גאון geon, the pride, is the reading of three of De Rossi's MSS., with the Septuagint and Arabic.

### **Verse 9**

**Strong drink "Palm wine"** - This is the proper meaning of the word שכר shechar, אקאטσ . See note on Isaiah 5:11. All enjoyment shall cease: the sweetest wine shall become bitter to their taste.

### **Verse 11**

**All joy is darkened "All gladness is passed away"** - For ערבה arebah, darkened, read עברה aberah, passed away, transposing a letter. Houbigant, Secker. Five of Dr. Kennicott's and five of De Rossi's MSS., several ancients add כל col, all, after משיש mesos : the Septuagint adds the same word before it.

## **Verses 14-16. Interlude: the preservation and song of remnant**

## Verse 14

**They shall lift up their voice "But these shall lift up their voice"** - That is, they that escaped out of these calamities. The great distresses brought upon Israel and Judah drove the people away, and dispersed them all over the neighboring countries: they fled to Egypt, to Asia Minor, to the islands and the coasts of Greece. They were to be found in great numbers in most of the principal cities of these countries. Alexandria was in a great measure peopled by them. They had synagogues for their worship in many places, and were greatly instrumental in propagating the knowledge of the true God among these heathen nations, and preparing them for the reception of Christianity. This it what the prophet seems to mean by the celebration of the name of Jehovah in the waters, in the distant coasts, and in the uttermost parts of the land. מים mayim, the waters; ὕδωρ, Sept.; ὕδατα, Theod.; not מים miyam from the sea.

## Verse 15

**In the isles of the sea "In the distant coasts of the sea"** - For בארים beurim, in the valleys, I suppose we ought to read באיים beiyim, in the isles, which is in a great degree justified by the repetition of the word in the next member of the sentence, with the addition of הים haiyam, the sea, to vary the phrase, exactly in the manner of the prophet. איים iyim is a word chiefly applied to any distant countries, especially those lying on the Mediterranean Sea. Others conjecture ביורים biorim, בהרים beharim, באמים beummim, בעמים beammim, בחורים bechorim, באורים beurim, a באר bar, illustrate - Le Clerc. Twenty-three MSS. of Kennicott's, many of De Rossi's, and some of my own, read באורים beorim, in the valleys. The Septuagint do not acknowledge the reading of the text, expressing here only the word איים iyim, ἐν ταῖς νησοῖς, in the islands, and that not repeated. But MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2 supply in this place the defect in the other copies of the Septuagint thus,

Δια τουτο ἡ δόξα Κυρίου ἐστὶ ἐν ταῖς νησοῖς τῆς θαλάσσης· ἐν ταῖς νησοῖς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου Θεοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐνδοξόν ἐστὶ·

"Therefore the glory of the Lord shall be in the isles of the sea: in the islands shall the name of the Lord God of Israel be glorified."

Kimchi says, that by באורים beurim, in the valleys is meant the cities, because they were generally built in valleys. The Vulgate has *in doctrinis*, and so my old MS., in techingis. Coverdale translates, Praise the name of the Lord God of Israel in the valleys and in the floodis. It should not be revered in the fires; none

of the ancient Versions understood it thus. According to which the Septuagint had in their Hebrew copy באיים beiyim, repeated afterwards, not בארים beirim .

## Verse 16

**But I said** - The prophet speaks in the person of the inhabitants of the land still remaining there, who should be pursued by Divine vengeance, and suffer repeated distresses from the inroads and depredations of their powerful enemies. Agreeably to what he said before in a general denunciation of these calamities: -

"Though there be a tenth part remaining in it;

Even this shall undergo a repeated destruction."

Isaiah 6:13; (note). See the note there.

My leanness, my leanness - Or, my secret; so the Vulgate, Montanus, and my old MS; רזן razan has this meaning in Chaldee; but in Hebrew it signifies to make lean, to waste. This sentence in the Hebrew has a strange connection of uncouth sounds: ואמר רזי לי רזי לי אוי לי בוגדים בגדו ובגד בגדים בגרו Vaomer, razi li razi li, oi li, bogedim bagadu, ubeged bogedim bagadu . This may be equalled by the translation in my Old MS. Bible: And I seide, my priveye thinge to me: my priveye thinge to me: woo to me: The lawe breykynge thei breken: and in lawe brekyng of the overdon thingis, they breken the lawe.

**The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously "The plunderers plunder"** - See note on Isaiah 21:2.

## Verses 17-22. The judgment of the Day of the Lord continued

### Verse 17

**Fear, and the pit "The terror, the pit"** - If they escape one calamity, another shall overtake them.

"As if a man should flee from a lion, and a bear should overtake him:

Or should betake himself to his house, and lean his hand on the wall,

And a serpent should bite him."

*Amos 5:19.*



"For," as our Savior expressed it in a like parabolical manner, "wheresoever the carcass is there shall the eagles be gathered together," Matthew 24:28. The images are taken from the different methods of hunting and taking wild beasts, which were anciently in use. The terror was a line strung with feathers of all colors which fluttering in the air scared and frightened the beasts into the toils, or into the pit which was prepared for them. *Nec est mirum, cum maximos ferarum greges linea pennis distincta contineat, et in insidias agat, ab ipso effectu dicta formido. Seneca de Ira, 2:12.* The pit or pitfall, *fovea*; digged deep in the ground, and covered over with green boughs, turf, etc., in order to deceive them, that they might fall into it unawares. The snare, or toils, *indago*; a series of nets, inclosing at first a great space of ground, in which the wild beasts were known to be; and then drawn in by degrees into a narrower compass, till they were at last closely shut up, and entangled in them. - L.

For מכול mikkol, a MS. reads ימפנ mippeney, as it is in Jeremiah 48:44, and so the Vulgate and Chaldee. But perhaps it is only, like the latter, a Hebraism, and means no more than the simple preposition מ mem . See Psalm 102:6. For it does not appear that the terror was intended to scare the wild beasts by its noise. The paronomasia is very remarkable; פחד pachad, פחת pachath, פך pach : and that it was a common proverbial form, appears from Jeremiah's repeating it in the same words, Jeremiah 48:43, Jeremiah 48:44.

## Verse 18

**Out of the midst of the pit "From the pit"** - For מתוך mittoch, from the midst of, a MS. reads מן min, from, as it is in Jeremiah 48:44; and so likewise the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

## Verse 19

**The earth "The land"** - הארץ haarets, *forte delendum* ה he, *ut ex praecedente ortum.* Vid. seqq. - Secker. "Probably the ה he, in הארץ haarets, should be blotted out, as having arisen from the preceding."

## Verse 20

**Like a cottage "Like a lodge for a night"** - See note on Isaiah 1:8.

## Verse 21

**On high - upon the earth** - That is, the ecclesiastical and civil polity of the Jews, which shall be destroyed. The nation shall continue in a state of

depression and dereliction for a long time. The image seems to be taken from the practice of the great monarchs of that time; who, when they had thrown their wretched captives into a dungeon, never gave themselves the trouble of inquiring about them; but let them lie a long time in that miserable condition, wholly destitute of relief, and disregarded. God shall at length revisit and restore his people in the last age: and then the kingdom of God shall be established in such perfection, as wholly to obscure and eclipse the glory of the temporary, typical, preparative kingdom now subsisting.

### **Verse 23. The millennial reign of Christ**

*So glorious will it be that the sun and moon will be confounded when Messiah' will reign on Mount Zion' in Jerusalem.*

**Before his ancients gloriously** - In the sigt of their olde men he schal ben glorified. Old MS. Bible.

"The figurative language of the prophets is taken from the analogy between the world natural and an empire or kingdom considered as a world politic. Accordingly the whole world natural, consisting of heaven and earth, signifies the whole world politic, consisting of thrones and people; or so much of it as is considered in prophecy: and the things in that world signify the analogous things in this. For the heavens and the things thereto signify thrones and dignities, and those who enjoy them; and the earth with the things thereon, the inferior people; and the lowest parts of the earth, called hades or hell, the lowest or most miserable part of them. Great earthquakes, and the shaking of heaven and earth, are put for the shaking of kingdoms, so as to distract and overthrow them; the creating a new heaven and earth, and the passing away of an old one, or the beginning and end of a world, for the rise and ruin of a body politic signified thereby. The sun, for the whole species and race of kings, in the kingdoms of the world politic; the moon, for the body of the common people, considered as the king's wife; the stars, for subordinate princes and great men; or for bishops and rulers of the people of God, when the sun is Christ: setting of the sun, moon, and stars. darkening the sun, Turning the moon into blood and falling of the stars, for the ceasing of a kingdom." Sir 1. Newton's Observations on the Prophecies, Part I., chap. 2.

These observations are of great consequence and use, in explaining the phraseology of the prophets.

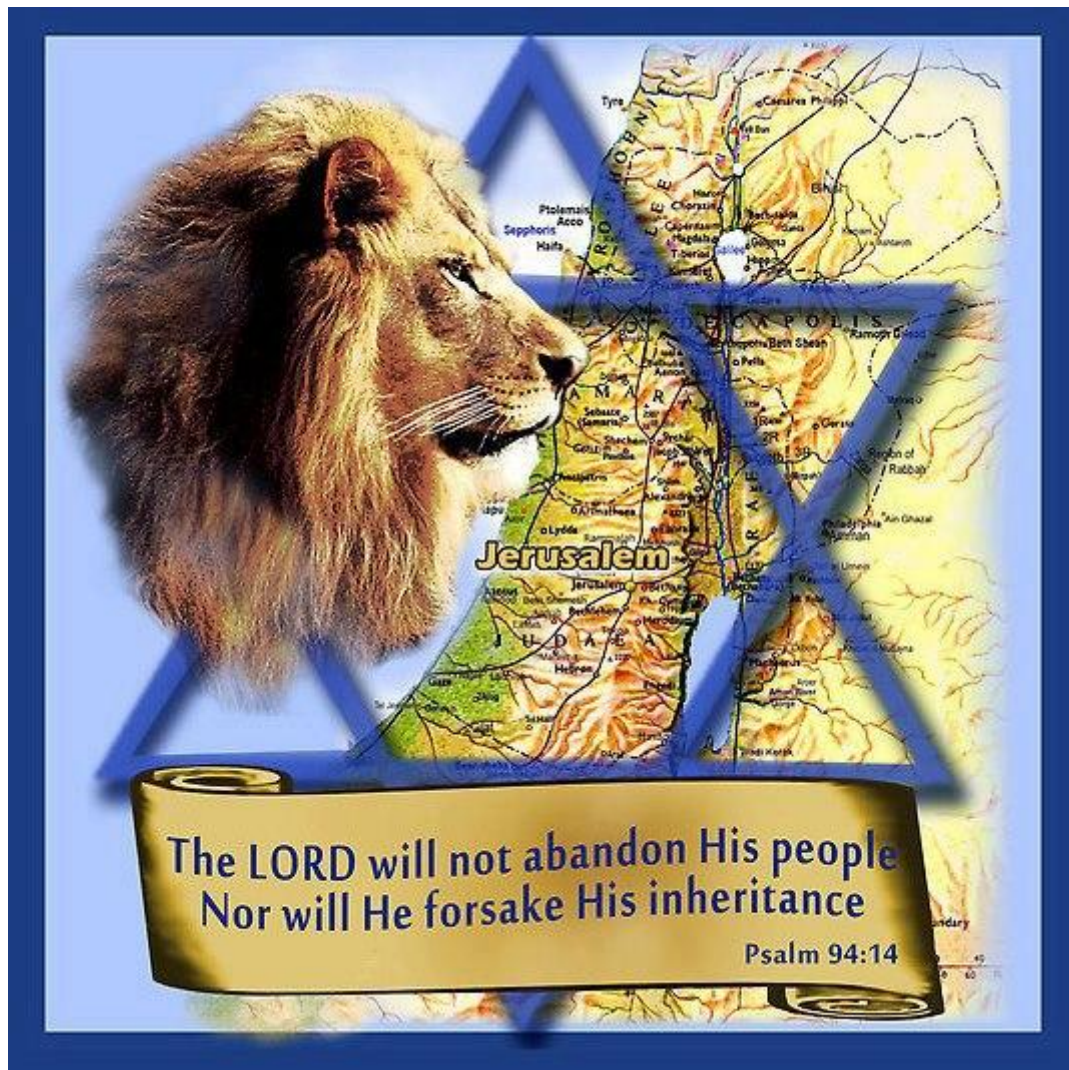


*Isaiah delivered a severe judgment on Jerusalem*

‘In that day the glory of Israel will be very dim, for poverty will stalk the land. Israel will be abandoned like the grain fields in the valley of Rephaim after the harvest. Only a few of its people will be left, like the stray olives left on the tree after the harvest. Only two or three remain in the highest branches, four or five out on the tips of the limbs. Yes, Israel will be stripped bare of people,’ says the Lord, the God of Israel.” Isaiah 17:4-6 (NLT)

The breadth and scope of destruction is clearly illustrated as God describes the Israeli landscape as stripped bare of people. Only a small fraction of people either choose to stay in the land or else survive what is a massive holocaust, leaving only a few inhabitants who struggle in poverty.

**“Then at last the people will think of their Creator and have respect for the Holy One of Israel. They will no longer ask their idols for help or worship what their own hands have made. They will never again bow down to their Asherah poles or burn incense on the altars they built.”** Isaiah 17:7-8 (NLT)



## Chapter 25

### 25. Israel's praise for kingdom blessing

#### Introduction

The short glance which the prophet gave at the promised restoration of the people of God and the Messiah's kingdom, in the close of the preceding chapter, makes him break out into a rapturous song of praise in this, where although he alludes to temporal mercies, such as the destruction of the cities which had been at war with Zion, the ruin of Moab, and other signal interpositions of Divine Providence in behalf of the Jews; yet he is evidently impressed with a more lively sense of future and much higher blessings under the Gospel dispensation, in the plenitude of its revelation, of which the temporal deliverances vouchsafed at various times to the primitive kingdoms of Israel and Judah were the prototypes, Isaiah 25:1-5. These blessings are described under the figure of a



feast made for all nations, Isaiah 25:6; the removing of a veil from their faces, Isaiah 25:7; the total extinction of the empire of death by the resurrection from the dead, the exclusion of all sorrow, and the final overthrow of all the enemies of the people of God, Isaiah 25:8-12.

It does not appear to me that this chapter has any close and particular connection with the chapter immediately preceding, taken separately, and by itself. The subject of that was the desolation of the land of Israel and Judah, by the just judgment of God, for the wickedness and disobedience of the people: which, taken by itself, seems not with any propriety to introduce a hymn of thanksgiving to God for his mercies to his people in delivering them from their enemies. But taking the whole course of prophecies, from the thirteenth to the twenty-fourth chapter inclusive, in which the prophet foretells the destruction of several cities and nations, enemies to the Jews, and of the land of Judah itself, yet with intimations of a remnant to be saved, and a restoration to be at length effected by a glorious establishment of the kingdom of God: with a view to this extensive scene of God's providence in all its parts, and in all its consequences, the prophet may well be supposed to break out into this song of praise; in which his mind seems to be more possessed with the prospect of future mercies than with the recollection of the past.

### **Verses 1-5. The delivered nation praises the Lord**

#### **Verse 1**

**Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth** - That is, All thy past declarations by the prophets shall be fulfilled in their proper time.

#### **Verse 2**

**A city "The city"** - Nineveh, Babylon, Ar, Moab, or any other strong fortress possessed by the enemies of the people of God.

For the first מעיר meir, of a city, the Syriac and Vulgate read העיר hair, the city; the Septuagint and Chaldee read ערים arim, cities, in the plural, transposing the letters. After the second מעיר meir, a MS. adds לגל lagol, for a heap.

**A palace of strangers "The palace of the proud ones"** - For זרים zarim, strangers, MS. Bodl. and another read זדים zedim, the proud: so likewise the Septuagint; for they render it ασεβων here, and in Isaiah 25:5, as they do in some other places: see Deuteronomy 18:20, Deuteronomy 18:22. Another MS. reads צרים tsarim, adversaries; which also makes a good sense. But זרים zarim,

strangers, and זדים zedim, the proud, are often confounded by the great similitude of the letters ד daleth and ר resh . See Malachi 3:15; Malachi 4:1; Psalm 19:14, in the Septuagint; and Psalm 54:5, where the Chaldee reads זדים zedim, compared with Psalm 86:16.

#### Verse 4

**As a storm against the wall "Like a winter-storm"** - For קיר kir, read קור kor : or, as עיר ir from ערר arar, so קיר kir from קרר karar . - Capellus.

#### Verse 5

**Of strangers "Of the proud"** - The same mistake here as in Isaiah 25:2; (note): see the note there. Here זדים zedim, the proud, is parallel to עריצים aritsim, the formidable: as in Psalm 54:5, and Psalm 86:14.

**The heat with the shadow of a cloud "As the heat by a thick cloud"** - For חרב choreb, the Syriac, Chaldee, Vulgate, and two MSS. read כחרב kechoreb, which is a repetition of the beginning of the foregoing parallel line; and the verse taken out of the parallel form, and more fully expressed, would run thus: "As a thick cloud interposing tempers the heat of the sun on the burnt soil; so shalt thou, by the interposition of thy power, bring low and abate the tumult of the proud, and the triumph of the formidable."

#### Verses 6-8. Blessings for all nations described

##### Verse 6

**In this mountain** - Zion, at Jerusalem. In his Church.

**Shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast** - Salvation by Jesus Christ. A feast is a proper and usual expression of joy in consequence of victory, or any other great success. The feast here spoken of is to be celebrated on Mount Sion; and all people, without distinction, are to be invited to it. This can be no other than the celebration of the establishment of Christ's kingdom, which is frequently represented in the Gospel under the image of a feast; "where many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven;" Matthew 8:11. See also Luke 14:16; Luke 24:29, Luke 24:30. This sense is fully confirmed by the concomitants of this feast expressed in the next verse, the removing of the veil from the face of the nations, and the abolition of death: the first of which is obviously and clearly explained of the preaching of the Gospel; and the second

must mean the blessing of immortality procured for us by Christ, "who hath abolished death, and through death hath destroyed him that had the power of death."

**Of wines on the lees "Of old wines"** - Hebrews lees; that is, of wines kept long on the lees. The word used to express the lees in the original signifies the preservers; because they preserve the strength and flavor of the wine. "All recent wines, after the fermentation has ceased, ought to be kept on their lees for a certain time, which greatly contributes to increase their strength and flavor. Whenever this first fermentation has been deficient, they will retain a more rich and sweet taste than is natural to them in a recent true vinous state; and unless farther fermentation is promoted by their lying longer on their own lees, they will never attain their genuine strength and flavor, but run into repeated and ineffectual fermentations, and soon degenerate into a liquor of an acetous kind. All wines of a light and austere kind, by a fermentation too great, or too long continued, certainly degenerate into a weak sort of vinegar; while the stronger not only require, but will safely bear a stronger and often-repeated fermentation; and are more apt to degenerate from a defect than excess of fermentation into a vapid, ropy, and at length into a putrescent state." Sir Edward Barry, *Observations on the Wines of the Ancients*, p. 9, 10.

Thevenot observes particularly of the Shiras wine, that, after it is refined from the lees, it is apt to grow sour.

*"Il a beaucoup de lie; c'est pourquoi il donne puissamment dans la teste; et pour le rendre plus traitable on le passe par un chausse d'hypocras; apres quoi il est fort clair, et moins fumeux. Ils mettent ce vin dans des grandes jarres de terres qui tiennent dix ou douze jusqu'a quatorze carabas: mais quand l'on a entame une jarre, il faut la vuider au plutot, et mettre le vin qu'on en tire dans des bouteilles ou carabas; car si l'on y manque en le laissant quelque tems apres que la jarre est entamee il se gate et s'aigrit."* Voyages, Tom. 2 p. 245.

"It has much sediment, and therefore is intoxicating. In order to make it more mellow, they strain it through a hypocrites' sleeve, after which it is very clear and less heady. They lay up this wine in great earthen jars, which hold from ten to fourteen carabas: but when a jar is unstopped, it is necessary to empty it immediately, and put the wine into bottles, or carabas; for if it be left thus in the jar, it will spoil and become acid."

The caraba, or girba, is a goat's skin drawn off from the animal, having no apertures but those occasioned by the tail, the feet, and the neck. One opening is left, to pour in and draw off the liquor. This skin goes through a sort of tanning



process, and is often beautifully ornamented, as is the case with one of these girbas now lying before me.

This clearly explains the very elegant comparison, or rather allegory, of Jeremiah, Jeremiah 48:11; where the reader will find a remarkable example of the mixture of the proper with the allegorical, not uncommon with the Hebrew poets: -

"Moab hath been at ease from his youth,  
And he hath settled upon his lees;  
Nor hath he been drawn off from vessel to vessel,  
Neither hath he gone into captivity:  
Wherefore his taste remaineth in him,  
And his flavor is not changed."

Sir John Chardin's MS. note on this place of Jeremiah is as follows:

*"On change ainsi le vin de coupe en coupe en Orient; et quand on en entame une, il faut la vuider en petites coupes ou bouteilles, sans quoy il s'aigrit."*

"They change the wine from vessel to vessel in the east; and when they unstop a large one, it is necessary to empty it into small vessels, as otherwise it will grow sour."

## Verse 7

**The face of the covering cast over all people** "The covering that covered the face of all the peoples" - MS. Bodl. reads על פני כל al peney chol . The word פני peney, face, has been removed from its right place into the line above, where it makes no sense; as Houbigant conjectured. "The face of the covering," etc. He will unveil all the Mosaic ritual, and show by his apostles that it referred to, and was accomplished in, the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ.

## Verse 8

**He will swallow up death** - He, by the grace of God, will taste death for every man. Hebrews 2:9. Probably, swallow up death, and taste death, in both these verses, refer to the same thing: Jesus dying instead of a guilty world. These

forms of speech may refer to the punishment of certain criminals; they were obliged to drink a cup of poison. That cup which every criminal in the world must have drunk, Jesus Christ drank for them; and thus he swallowed up death: but as he rose again from the dead, complete victory was gained.

From these three verses we learn: -

I. That the Gospel is a plenteous provision: "I will make a feast for all people."

II. That it is a source of light and salvation: "I will destroy the veil. I will abolish death. and bring life and immortality to light."

III. That it is a source of comfort and happiness: "I will wipe away all tears from off all faces."

As in the Arabic countries a covering was put over the face of him who was condemned to suffer death, it is probable that the words in Isaiah 25:7; may refer to this. The whole world was condemned to death, and about to be led out to execution, when the gracious Lord interposed, and, by a glorious sacrifice, procured a general pardon.

### **Verse 9. Israel's reward for waiting**

#### **Verse 9**

**It shall be said "Shall they say"** - So the Septuagint and Vulgate, in the plural number. They read *וַעֲמֵרוּ* veameru, the Syriac reads *וַעֲמָרְתָּ* veamarta, thou shalt say. They shall say, i.e., the Jews and the Gentiles - Lo, this [Jesus Christ] is our God: we have waited for him, according to the predictions of the prophets. We have expected him, and we have not been disappointed; therefore will we be glad, and rejoice in his salvation.

### **Verses 10-11. Israel's enemies judged**

#### **Verse 10**

**Shall the hand of the Lord rest "The hand of Jehovah shall give rest"** - Hebrews *תְּנוּחַ* tenuach, *quiescet*. Annon *תְּנִיחַ* taniach, *quietem dabit*, shall rest; shall give rest, *ut Graeci*, *ἀναπαύσας δώσας*, et Copt.? - Mr. Woide. That is, "shall give peace and quiet to Sion, by destroying the enemy; "as it follows."

**As straw is trodden down "As the straw is threshed"** - *Hoc junta ritum loquitur Palastinae et multarum Orientis provinciarum, quae ob pratorum et*

*foeni penuriam paleas preparant esui animantium. Sunt autem carpenta ferrata rotis per medium in serrarum modum se volventibus, quae stipulam conterunt; et comminuunt in paleas. Quomodo igitur plaustis ferratis paleae conteruntur, sic conteretur Moab sub eo; sive sub Dei potentia, sive in semetipso, ut nihil in eo integri remaneat.* "This is spoken in reference to the mode of threshing in Palestine, and various other Asiatic provinces. Because of the scarcity of meadow land and hay they make chopped straw for the cattle. They have large wheels studded over with iron teeth or nails, by which, on the out-of-door threshing-floors, they pound and reduce the straw into chaff. As, therefore, the straw is reduced to chaff by bringing the iron-shod wheel over it; so shall Moab be bruised by the power of God, that nothing whole shall remain." - Hieron. in loc. See the note on Isaiah 28:27; (note).

**For the dunghill "Under the wheels of the car"** - For מדמנה madmenah, the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read מרכבה mercabah, which I have followed. See Joshua 15:31, compared with Joshua 19:5, where there is a mistake very nearly the same. The keri, במי bemi, is confirmed by twenty-eight MSS., seven ancient, and three editions.

## Verse 11

**As he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim "As he that sinketh stretcheth out his hands to swim"** - There is great obscurity in this place: some understand God as the agent; others, Moab. I have chosen the latter sense, as I cannot conceive that the stretching out of the hands of a swimmer in swimming can be any illustration of the action of God stretching out his hands over Moab to destroy it. I take השחשח hashshocheh, altering the point on the ש sin . on the authority of the Septuagint, to be the participle of שחח shachah, the same with שוח shuach, and שחח shachach, to bow down, to be depressed; and that the prophet designed a paronomasia here, a figure which he frequently uses between the similar words שחח shachah, and שחח shechoth . As תחתיו tachtaiv, in his place, or on the spot, as we say in the preceding verse, gives us an idea of the sudden and complete destruction of Moab; so בקרבו bekirbo, in the midst of him, means that this destruction shall be open, and exposed to the view of all: the neighboring nations shall plainly see him struggling against it, as a man in the midst of the deep waters exerts all his efforts by swimming, to save himself from drowning.

## Chapter 26

### 26. Judah's millennial song

#### Introduction

This chapter, like the foregoing, is a song of praise, in which thanksgivings for temporal and spiritual mercies are beautifully mingled, though the latter still predominate. Even the sublime and evangelical doctrine of the resurrection seems here to be hinted at, and made to typify the deliverance of the people of God from a state of the lowest misery; the captivity, the general dispersion, or both. This hymn too, like the preceding, is beautifully diversified by the frequent change of speakers. It opens with a chorus of the Church, celebrating the protection vouchsafed by God to his people; and the happiness of the righteous, whom he guards, contrasted with the misery of the wicked, whom he punishes, Isaiah 26:1-7. To this succeeds their own pious resolution of obeying, trusting, and delighting in God, Isaiah 26:8. Here the prophet breaks in, in his own person, eagerly catching the last words of the chorus, which were perfectly in unison with the feelings of his own soul, and which he beautifully repeats, as one musical instrument reverberates the sound of another on the same key with it. He makes likewise a suitable response to what had been said on the judgments of God, and observes their different effects on the good and the bad; improving the one, and hardening the other, Isaiah 26:9-11. After this, a chorus of Jews express their gratitude to God for past deliverances, make confession of their sins, and supplicate his power, which they had been long expecting, Isaiah 26:12-18. To this God makes a gracious reply, promising deliverance that should be as life from the dead, Isaiah 26:19. And the prophet, (apparently alluding to the command of Moses to the Israelites, when the destroying angel was to go through the land of Egypt), concludes with exhorting his people to patience and resignation, till God sends the deliverance he has promised, Isaiah 26:20, Isaiah 26:21.

#### Verses 1-6. Praise for the Lord's faithfulness and mercies

##### Verse 1

**We have a strong city** - In opposition to the city of the enemy, which God hath destroyed, Isaiah 25:1-12; (note). See the note there.

**Salvation - for walls and bulwarks** - חומת וחל chomsoth vachel, walls and redoubts, or the walls and the ditch. חל chel properly signifies the ditch or trench

without the wall; see Kimchi. The same rabbin says, This song refers to the time of salvation, i.e., the days of the Messiah.

## Verse 2

**The righteous nation** - The converted Gentiles shall have the gates opened - a full entrance into all the glories and privileges of the Gospel; being fellow heirs with the converted Jews. The Jewish peculiarity is destroyed, for the middle wall of partition is broken down.

**The truth** - The Gospel itself - as the fulfillment of all the ancient types, shadows, and ceremonies; and therefore termed the truth, in opposition to all those shadowy rites and ceremonies. "The law was given by Moses; but grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ; " John 1:17, and see the note there.

## Verse 3

**In perfect peace** - שלום שלום shalom, shalom, "peace, peace, "i.e., peace upon peace - all kinds of prosperity - happiness in this world and in the world to come.

**Because he trusteth in thee "Because they have trusted in thee"** - So the Chaldee, בטחו betacho . The Syriac and Vulgate read בטוח batachnu, "we have trusted. "Schroeder, Gram. Hebrews p. 360, explains the present reading בטוח batuach, impersonally, *confisum est*.

## Verse 4

**In the Lord Jehovah "In Jehovah"** - In Jah Jehovah, Heb.; but see Houbigant, and the note on Isaiah 12:2; (note).

**Everlasting strength** - צור עולמים tsur olamim, "the rock of ages; "or, according to Rab. Maimon, - the eternal Fountain, Source, or Spring. Does not this refer to the lasting streams from the rock in the desert? And that rock was Christ. ge han hoped in the Lord fro the everlasting worldis. - Old Ms. Bible.

## **Verses 7-11. Experiences of waiting during the night**

## **Verses 12-18. Assurances of peace and deliverance**

### **Verse 8**

**Have we waited for thee "We have placed our confidence in thy name" -** The Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee read קוֹיְנוּ kavinu, without the pronoun annexed.

### **Verse 9**

**Have I desired thee -** Forty-one MSS. of Dr. Kennicott's and many of De Rossi's, (nine ancient), and five editions read אוֹיְחִיךָ invithicha . It is proper to note this; because the second ם yod being omitted in the text, the Vulgate and many others have rendered it in the third person.

**When thy judgments, etc. -** It would be better to read, When thy judgments were in the earth, the inhabitants of the world have learned (לָמְדוּ lamedu ) righteousness. Men seldom seek God in prosperity; they are apt to rest in an earthly portion: but God in mercy embitters this by adversity; then there is a general cry after himself as our chief, solid, and only permanent good.

### **Verse 16**

**Lord, in trouble have they visited thee "O Jehovah, in affliction we have sought thee" -** So the Septuagint and two MSS. have פִּקְדֹנוֹךְ pekadnucha, in the first person plural. And so perhaps it should be צִקְנוּ tsaknu, in the first person; but how the Septuagint read this word is not clear; and this last member of the verse is extremely obscure.

For לָמוּ lamo, "on them," the Septuagint read לָנוּ lanu, "on us," in the first person likewise; a frequent mistake; see note on Isaiah 10:29.

**Verse 19. Assurance of the bodily resurrection of righteous O.T. saints.**  
(*Your dead will live; their bodies will rise.*)

### **Verse 18**

**We have - brought forth wind -** The learned Professor Michaelis explains this image in the following manner: "*Rariores morbum describi, empneumatosin, aut ventosam molam, dictum; quo quae laborant diu et sibi et peritis medicis gravidae videntur, tandemque post omnes verae graviditatis molestias et labore*

*ventum ex utero emittunt: quem morbum passim describunt medici.* "Syntagma Comment., vol. ii., p. 165. The empneumatosi, or windy inflation of the womb, is a disorder to which females are liable. Some have had this in such wise, for a long time together, that they have appeared to themselves, and even to very skillful medical men, to be pregnant; and after having endured much pain, and even the throes of apparent childbearing, they have been eased and restored to health by the emission of a great quantity of wind from the uterus. This disorder is well known to medical men. "The Syriac translator seems to have understood it in this manner: *Enixi sumus, ut illae quae ventos pariunt.* "We have brought forth as they who bring forth wind."

**In the earth "In the land"** - בארץ bearets ; so a MS., the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

### Verse 19

**My dead body "My deceased"** - All the ancient Versions render it in the plural; they read נבלוֹתִי niblothai, my dead bodies. The Syriac and Chaldee read יִהְיוּנַבְלוֹתֵיהֶם niblotheyhem, their dead bodies. No MS. yet found confirms this reading.

**The dew of herbs "The dew of the dawn"** - Lucis, according to the Vulgate; so also the Syriac and Chaldee.

The deliverance of the people of God from a state of the lowest depression is explained by images plainly taken from the resurrection of the dead. In the same manner the Prophet Ezekiel represents the restoration of the Jewish nation from a state of utter dissolution by the restoring of the dry bones to life, exhibited to him in a vision, chap. 37, which is directly thus applied and explained, Ezekiel 37:11-13. And this deliverance is expressed with a manifest opposition to what is here said above, Ezekiel 37:14, of the great lords and tyrants, under whom they had groaned: -

"They are dead, they shall not live;

They are deceased tyrants, they shall not rise:"

that they should be destroyed utterly, and should never be restored to their former power and glory. It appears from hence, that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was at that time a popular and common doctrine; for an image which is assumed in order to express or represent any thing in the way of allegory or metaphor, whether poetical or prophetic, must be an image



commonly known and understood; otherwise it will not answer the purpose for which it is assumed. –

Kimchi refers these words to the days of the Messiah, and says, "Then many of the saints shall rise from the dead. "And quotes Daniel 12:2. Do not these words speak of the resurrection of our blessed Lord; and of that resurrection of the bodies of men, which shall be the consequence of his body being raised from the dead?

**Thy dead men shall live, - with my dead body shall they arise -** This seems very express.

### **Verses 20-21. Glimpse of the divine indignation in the Day of the Lord**

#### **Verse 20**

**Comes my people, enter thou into thy chambers -** An exhortation to patience and resignation under oppression, with a confident expectation of deliverance by the power of God manifestly to be exerted in the destruction of the oppressor. It seems to be an allusion to the command of Moses to the Israelites, when the destroying angel was to go through the land of Egypt, "not to go out at the door of their houses until the morning;" Exodus 12:22. And before the passage of the Red Sea: "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah. Jehovah shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace, " Exodus 14:13, Exodus 14:14.

#### **Verse 21**

**The earth also shall disclose her blood -** Crimes of cruelty and oppression, which have passed away from the eyes of men, God will bring into judgment, and exact punishment for them. O what a reckoning will the kingdoms of the earth have with God, for the torrents of blood which they have shed for the gratification of the lust of power and ambition! Who shall live when he doeth this?

## Chapter 27

### 27. Punishment of Israel's enemies and kingdom triumph

#### Introduction

Destruction of the enemies of the Church, Isaiah 27:1. God's care of his vineyard, Isaiah 27:2-11. Prosperity of the descendants of Abraham in the latter days, Isaiah 27:12, Isaiah 27:13.

The subject of this chapter seems to be the nature, the measure, and the design of God's dealings with his people.

1. His judgments inflicted on their great and powerful enemies, Isaiah 27:1.
  - His constant care and protection of his favorite vineyard, in the form of a dialogue, Isaiah 27:2.
  - The moderation and lenity with which the severity of his judgments have been tempered, Isaiah 27:7.
  - The end and design of them, to recover them from idolatry, Isaiah 27:9. And,
  - The recalling of them, on their repentance, from their several dispersions, Isaiah 27:12. The first verse seems connected with the two last verses of the preceding chapter. -

#### Verse 1. Destruction of Israel's enemies

##### Verse 1

**Leviathan** - The animals here mentioned seem to be the crocodile, rigid by the stiffness of the backbone, so that he cannot readily turn himself when he pursues his prey; hence the easiest way of escaping from him is by making frequent and short turnings: the serpent or dragon, flexible and winding, which coils himself up in a circular form: and the sea monster, or whale. These are used allegorically, without doubt for great potentates, enemies and persecutors of the people of God: but to specify the particular persons or states designed by the prophet under these images, is a matter of great difficulty, and comes not necessarily within the design of these notes. R. D. Kimchi says, leviathan is a parable concerning the kings of the Gentiles: it is the largest fish in the sea,

called also תנין tannin, the dragon, or rather the whale. By these names the Grecian, Turkish, and Roman empires are intended. The dragon of the sea seems to mean some nation having a strong naval force and extensive commerce. See Kimchi on the place.

## **Verses 2-9. The Lord's care for his own even in chastening**

### **Verse 2**

**Sing ye unto her** - אנו לה anu lah . Bishop Lowth translates this, Sing ye a responsive song; and says that ענה anah, to answer, signifies occasionally to sing responsively; and that this mode of singing was frequently practiced among the ancient Hebrews. See De Poes. Sac. Hebrews Prael. xix., at the beginning.

This, indeed, was the ancient method of singing in various nations. The song was divided into distinct portions, and the singers sang alternately. There is a fine specimen of this in the song of Deborah and Barak; and also in the Idyls of Theocritus, and the Eclogues of Virgil.

This kind of singing was properly a dialogue in verse, sung to a particular tune, or in the mode which is now termed *recitativo*. I have seen it often practiced on funeral occasions among the descendants of the aboriginal Irish. The poems of Ossian are of this kind.

The learned Bishop distinguishes the parts of this dialogue thus: -

1. Jehovah. It is I, Jehovah, that preserve her; I will water her every moment: I will take care of her by night; And by day I will keep guard over her.
2. Vineyard. I have no wall for my defense: O that I had a fence of the thorn and brier! Jehovah. Against them should I march in battle, I should burn them up together.
3. Ah! let her rather take hold of my protection. Vineyard. Let him make peace with me! Peace let him make with me!
4. Jehovah. They that come from the root of Jacob shall flourish, Israel shall bud forth; And they shall fill the face of the world with fruit.

**A vineyard of red wine** - The redder the wine, the more it was valued, says Kimchi.

Bishop Lowth translates, To the beloved vineyard. For חמר chemer, red, a multitude of MSS. and editions have חמד chemed, desirable. This is supported by the Septuagint and Chaldee.

### Verse 3

**Lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day - "I will take care of her by night; and by day I will keep guard over her"** - For פֶּן יִפְקֹד pen yiphkod, lest any visit it, the Syriac read וַאֲפִקֹד veephkod, and I will visit it. Twenty MSS. of Kennicott's, fourteen of De Rossi's, and two of my own, and six editions read אֲפִקֹד ephkod, I will visit, in the first person.

### Verse 4

**Fury is not in me "I have no wall"** - For חֶמָה chemah, anger, the Septuagint and Syriac read חוֹמָה chomah, wall. An ancient MS. has חֵימָה cheimah . For בָּהּ bad, in her, two MSS. read בָּם bam, in them, plural. The vineyard wishes for a wall and a fence of thorns - human strength and protection, (as the Jews were too apt to apply to their powerful neighbors for assistance, and to trust to the shadow of Egypt): Jehovah replies, that this would not avail her, nor defend her against his wrath. He counsels her, therefore, to betake herself to his protection. On which she entreats him to make peace with her.

From the above note it appears that the bishop reads, חוֹמָה chomah, wall, for חֶמָה chemah, anger or fury, in accordance with the Syriac and Septuagint. The letter וּ vau makes the only difference, which letter is frequently absent from many words where its place is supplied by the point. cholem : it might have been so here formerly; and in process of time both vau and cholem might have been lost. The Syriac supports the learned bishop's criticism, as the word shora is there used; which word in the plural is found, Hebrews 11:30; : "By faith the walls of Jericho. "The bishop thinks the Septuagint is on his side: to me, it seems neither for nor against the criticism. The words in the Vatican copy are ἐγὼ πολὺς οὐρα, I am a fortified city; which the Arabic follows: but instead of οὐρα, the Codex Alexandrinus has ὁρᾶ, I am a Strong city.

The word חוֹמָה chomah, wall, is not found in any MS. in the collections of Kennicott and De Rossi, nor in any of my own MSS.

However, one of Dr. Kennicott's MSS. has חֵימָה cheimah ; but probably that which now appears to be a י yod was formerly a וּ vau, and now partially obliterated.

This song receives much light from being collated with that in chap. 5.; and perhaps the bishop's criticism will find its best support from such a collation. In Isaiah 5:5; of that chapter, God threatens to take away the wall of his vineyard: this was done; and here the vineyard complains, I have no wall, and wishes for

any kind of defense rather than be thus naked. This is the only natural support of the above criticism.

"About Tripoli there are abundance of vineyards and gardens, inclosed, for the most part, with hedges, which chiefly consist of the rhamnus, paliurus, oxyacantha, "etc. Rawolf, p. 21, 22. A fence of thorns is esteemed equal to a wall for strength, being commonly represented as impenetrable. See Micah 7:4; Hosea 2:6.

**Who would set the briers and thorns against me "O that I had a fence of the thorn and brier"** - Seven MSS., (two ancient), and one edition, with the Syriac, Vulgate, and Aquila, read ושיית veshayith, with the conjunction ו vau prefixed: Who would set the briers and thorns. מי יתנני שמיר שית mi yitteneni shamir shayith, Who shall give me the brier and thorn, i.e., for a defense: but hear Kimchi: "Who (the vineyard) hath given me (Jehovah) the brier and the thorn instead of good grapes."

#### **Verse 5**

**Or "Ah"** - For או I read אוי oi, as it was at first in a MS. The י yod was easily lost, being followed by another י yod .

#### **Verse 6**

**To take root "From the root"** - For ישרש yashresh, I read, with the Syriac, משרש mishshoresh . And for יציץ ופרח yatsits uparach, יציץ פרח yatsitsu parach, joining the ו vau to the first word, and taking that into construction with the first part of the sentence, Israel shall bud forth. I suppose the dialogue to be continued in this verse, which pursues the same image of the allegory, but in the way of metaphor.

#### **Verse 9**

**The groves "And if the groves"** - ולא velo . Four MSS., two ancient, of Kennicott's, and one ancient of my own, with the Septuagint; this makes a fuller sense.

#### **Verses 10-11. Israel's enemies are destroyed**

##### **Verse 10**

**There shall the calf feed** - That is, the king of Egypt, says Kimchi.

## Verse 11

**The boughs thereof "Her boughs"** - קציריה ketsireyha, MS. and Vulg.; that is, the boughs of the vineyard, referring still to the subject of the dialogue above.

The scarcity of fuel, especially wood, in most parts of the east is so great, that they supply it with every thing capable of burning; cow-dung dried, roots, parings of fruit, withered stalks of herbs and flowers; see Matthew 6:21-30. Vine-twigs are particularly mentioned as used for fuel in dressing their food, by D'Arvieux; La Roque, Palestine, p. 198. Ezekiel says, in his parable of the vine, used figuratively for the people of God, as the vineyard is here: "Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; " Ezekiel 15:3, Ezekiel 15:4. "If a man abide not in one, "saith our Lord, "he is cast forth as a branch of the vine and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned;" John 15:6. They employed women and children to gather these things, and they laid them up in store for use. The dressing and pruning their vines afforded a good supply of the last sort of fuel; but the prophet says that the vines themselves of the beloved vineyard shall be blasted, withered, and broken, and the women shall come and gather them up, and carry away the whole of them to make their fires for domestic uses. See Harmer's Observations, vol. i., p. 254, etc.

## Verses 12-13. The return of the remnant

### Verse 12

**The channel of the river** - The river Sabbathon, beyond which the Israelites were carried captive. - Kimchi.

### Verse 13

**The great trumpet shall be blown** - Does not this refer to the time spoken of by our Lord, Matthew 24:31; : He shall send forth his angels - the preachers of his Gospel with a great sound of a trumpet - the earnest invitation to be saved by Jesus Christ; and shall gather his elect - the Jews, his ancient chosen people, from the four winds - from all parts of the habitable globe in which they have been dispersed.

In this prophet there are several predictions relative to the conversion of Egypt to the true faith, which have not yet been fulfilled, and which must be fulfilled, for the truth of God cannot fail. Should Egypt ever succeed in casting off the



Ottoman yoke, and fully establish its independence, it is most likely that the Gospel of Christ would have a speedy entrance into it; and, according to these prophecies, a wide and permanent diffusion. At present the Mohammedan power is a genuine antichrist. This also the Lord will remove in due time.



*Ancient farming methods in the Jerusalem mountains*

*At the present time in Israel you can find evidence of ancient techniques of cultivating fruits and vegetables using a system of hillside terraces bordered with stone. Viewing these terraces is easy around the mountains of Jerusalem, where a system of springs, channels and terraces, accessible by hiking trails, has been reconstructed at Sataf as well as at the En Hemed National Park.*

*Following picture:*

*During construction of Nazareth Village, excavators discovered that this area had been farmed in the Roman period. Remains of ancient terraces and a winepress were revealed, and these may have been in use in the 1st century when Jesus lived in the village. Because Nazareth Village was established as a working farm, the visitor's experience changes throughout the year. In the fall, the fields are plowed and planted, and in the spring the wheat is harvested and brought to the threshing floor. Here the threshing sledge separates the grain from the straw, and then the grain was tossed into the air and the wind would carry away the chaff. For older photos depicting this process*





## **Volume V. Book of woes preceding restoration glories, 28:1-35:10**

### **Chapter 28**

#### **Introduction**

#### **28. Woe against Ephraim**

This chapter begins with a denunciation of the approaching ruin of the Israelites by Shalmaneser, whose power is compared to a tempest or flood, and his keenness to the avidity with which one plucks and swallows the grape that is soonest ripe, Isaiah 28:1-4. It then turns to the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who were to continue a kingdom after the final captivity of their brethren; and gives first a favorable prognostication of their affairs under Hezekiah, Isaiah 28:5, Isaiah 28:6; but soon changes to reproofs and threatenings for their intemperance and their profaneness, Isaiah 28:7, Isaiah 28:8. They are introduced as not only scornfully rejecting, but also mocking and ridiculing, the instructions of the prophet, Isaiah 28:9, Isaiah 28:10. To this God immediately

retorts in terms alluding to their own mocking, but differently applied, Isaiah 28:11-13. The prophet then addresses these scoffers, Isaiah 28:14; who considered themselves as perfectly secure from every evil, Isaiah 28:15; and assures them that there was no method under heaven but one, by which they could be saved, Isaiah 28:16; that every other vain resource should fail in the day of visitation, Isaiah 28:17, Isaiah 28:18. He then farther adds, that the judgments of God were particularly levelled against them; and that all the means to which they trusted for warding them off should be to no purpose, Isaiah 28:19, Isaiah 28:20; as the Almighty, who, on account of his patience and long-suffering, is amiably described as unacquainted with punishing, had nevertheless determined to punish them, Isaiah 28:21, Isaiah 28:22. The prophet then concludes with a beautiful parable in explanation and defense of God's dealing with his people, Isaiah 28:23-29.

### **Verses 1-13. Judgment upon the twelve tribes**

#### **Verse 1**

**Woe to the crown of pride** - By the crown of pride, etc., Samaria is primarily understood. "Sebaste, the ancient Samaria, is situated on a long mount of an oval figure, having first a fruitful valley, and then a ring of hills running round about it;" Maundrell, p. 58. "*E regione horum ruderum mons est peramoenus, planitie admodum frugifera circumseptus, super quem olim Samaria urbs condita fuit;*" Fureri Itinerarium, p. 93. The city, beautifully situated on the top of a round hill, and surrounded immediately with a rich valley and a circle of other hills beyond it, suggested the idea of a chaplet or wreath of flowers worn upon their heads on occasions of festivity, expressed by the proud crown and the fading flower of the drunkards. That this custom of wearing chaplets in their banquets prevailed among the Jews, as well as among the Greeks and Romans, appears from the following passage of the book of The Wisdom of Solomon: -

"Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments,

And let no flower of the spring pass by us:

Let us crown ourselves with rose-buds before they are withered."

The Wisdom of Solomon 2:7, 8.

#### **Verse 2**

**Behold the Lord hath a mighty and strong one "Behold the mighty one, the exceedingly strong one"** - לאדני אִמִּיט ammits ladonai, *fortis Domino*, i.e.,

fortissimus, a Hebraism. For לאדני ladonai, to the Lord, thirty-eight MSS. Of Dr. Kennicott's and many of De Rossi's, with some of my own, and two editions, read ליהוה laihovah, to Jehovah.

### Verse 3

**The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim "The proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim"** - I read עטרות ataroth, crowns, plural, to agree with the verb תרמסנה teramasnah, "shall be trodden down."

### Verse 4

**The hasty fruit before the summer "The early fruit before the summer"** - "No sooner doth the boccore, (the early fig), draw near to perfection in the middle or latter end of June, than the kermez or summer fig begins to be formed, though it rarely ripens before August; about which time the same tree frequently throws out a third crop, or the winter fig, as we may call it. This is usually of a much longer shape and darker complexion than the kermez, hanging and ripening upon the tree even after the leaves are shed; and, provided the winter proves mild and temperate, is gathered as a delicious morsel in the spring; "Shaw, Travels, p. 370, fol. The image was very obvious to the inhabitants of Judea and the neighboring countries, and is frequently applied by the prophets to express a desirable object; by none more elegantly than by Hosea 9:10; :-

"Like grapes in the wilderness I found Israel;

Like the first ripe fig in her prime, I saw your fathers."

**Which when he that looketh upon it seeth "Which whoso seeth, he plucketh it immediately"** - For יראה yireh, which with הראה haroeh makes a miserable tautology, read, by a transposition of a letter, יארה yoreh ; a happy conjecture of Houbigant. The image expresses in the strongest manner the great ease with which the Assyrians shall take the city and the whole kingdom, and the avidity with which they shall seize the rich prey without resistance.

### Verse 5

**In that day** - Thus far the prophecy relates to the Israelites, and manifestly denounces their approaching destruction by Shalmaneser. Here it turns to the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, the remnant of God's people who were to continue a kingdom after the final captivity of the Israelites. It begins with a



favorable prognostication of their affairs under Hezekiah; but soon changes to reproofs and threatenings for their intemperance, disobedience, and profaneness.

Jonathan's Targum on this verse is worthy of notice: "In that time Messiah, the Lord of hosts משיחא דיי צבאות meshicha dayai tsebaoth, shall be a crown of joy and a diadem of praise to the residue of his people." Kimchi says the rabbins in general are of this opinion. Here then the rabbins, and their most celebrated Targum, give the incommunicable name, יהוה צבאות Yehovah tsebaoth, the Lord of hosts, to our ever blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

## Verse 6

**The battle to the gate "The war to the gate of the enemy"** - That is, who pursue the fleeing enemy even to the very gates of their own city. "But we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate," 2 Samuel 11:23; that is, we drove the enemy back to their own gates. See also 1 Samuel 17:52. The Targum says, The Messiah shall give the victory to those who go out to battle, that he may bring them back to their own houses in peace.

## Verse 9

**Whom shall he teach knowledge?" Whom, say they, would he teach knowledge?"** - The scoffers mentioned below, Isaiah 28:14, are here introduced as uttering their sententious speeches; they treat God's method of dealing with them, and warning them by his prophets, with contempt and derision. What, say they, doth he treat us as mere infants just weaned? doth he teach us like little children, perpetually inculcating the same elementary lessons, the mere rudiments of knowledge; precept after precept, line after line, here and there, by little and little? imitating at the same time, and ridiculing, in Isaiah 28:10, the concise prophetic manner. God, by his prophet, retorts upon them with great severity their own contemptuous mockery, turning it to a sense quite different from what they intended. Yes, saith he, it shall be in fact as you say; ye shall be taught by a strange tongue and a stammering lip; in a strange country; ye shall be carried into captivity by a people whose language shall be unintelligible to you, and which ye shall be forced to learn like children. And my dealing with you shall be according to your own words: it shall be command upon command for your punishment; it shall be line upon line, stretched over you to mark your destruction, (compare 2 Kings 21:13); it shall come upon you at different times, and by different degrees, till the judgments, with which from time to time I have threatened you, shall have their full accomplishment.

Jerome seems to have rightly understood the general design of this passage as expressing the manner in which the scoffers, by their sententious speeches, turned into ridicule the warnings of God by his prophets, though he has not so well explained the meaning of the repetition of their speech in Isaiah 28:13. His words are on Isaiah 28:9; "*Solebant hoc ex persona prophetarum ludentes dicere:*" and on Isaiah 28:14; "*Quod supra diximus, cum irrisione solitos principes Judaeorum prophetis dicere, manda, remanda, et caetera his similia, per quae ostenditur, nequaquam eos prophetarum credidisse sermonibus, sed prophetiam habuisse despectui, praesens ostendit capitulum, per quod appellantur viri illusores.*" Hieron. in loc.

And so Jarchi interprets the word משלים mishelim in the next verse: *Qui dicunt verba irrisionis parabolice.*" And the Chaldee paraphrases Isaiah 28:11; to the same purpose, understanding it as spoken, not of God, but of the people deriding his prophets: "*Quoniam in mutatione loquelae et in lingua subsannationis irridebant contra prophetas, qui prophetabant populo huic.*" - L.

## Verse 10

**For precept must be upon precept** - The original is remarkably abrupt and sententious. The hemistichs are these: -

זעיר שם זעיר שם lakau kau lakau kau לקו קו לקו קו latsav tsav latsav tsav כי צו לצו צו לצו  
sham zeeir sham zeeir

For, - Command to command, command to command.

Line to line, line to line.

A little there, a little there.

Kimchi says צו tsau, precept, is used here for מצוה mitsuah, command, and is used in no other place for it but here. צו tsau signifies a little precept, such as is suited to the capacity of a child; see Isaiah 28:9. קו kau signifies the line that a mason stretches out to build a layer of stones by. After one layer or course is placed, he raises the line and builds another; thus the building is by degrees regularly completed. This is the method of teaching children, giving them such information as their narrow capacities can receive; and thus the prophet dealt with the Israelites. See Kimchi in loc., and see a fine parallel passage, Hebrews 5:12-14, by which this may be well illustrated.

My old MS. Bible translates oddly: -

For sende efter sende, sende efter sende:

Abide efter abiide, abide efter abiide:

Lytyl ther, lytyl ther.

Coverdale is also singular: -

Commande that may be commanded;

Byd that maye be bydden:

Foorbyd that maye be forbydden;

Kepe backe that maye be kepte backe:

Here a litle, there a litle.

## **Verse 12**

**This is the rest "This is the true rest"** - The sense of this verse is: God had warned them by his prophets that their safety and security, their deliverance from their present calamities and from the apprehensions of still greater approaching, depended wholly on their trust in God, their faith and obedience; but they rejected this gracious warning with contempt and mockery.

## **Verses 14-29. Fate of Ephraim a warning to Judah**

### **Verse 15**

**A covenant with death** - To be in covenant with, is a kind of proverbial expression to denote perfect security from evil and mischief of any sort: -

"For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field;

And the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee."

*Job 5:23.*

"And I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field. And with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground."

*Hosea 2:18.*

That is, none of these shall hurt them. But Lucan, speaking of the Psylli, whose peculiar property it was to be unhurt by the bite of serpents, with which their country abounded, comes still nearer to the expression of Isaiah in this place: -

*Gens unica terras*

*Incolit a saevo serpentum innoxia morsu*

*Marmaridae Psylli. -*

*Pax illis cum morte data est.*

*Pharsal. 9:891.*

"Of all who scorching Afric's sun endure,  
None like the swarthy Psyllians are secure:  
With healing gifts and privileges graced,  
Well in the land of serpents were they placed:  
Truce with the dreadful tyrant death they have,  
And border safely on his realm the grave."

*Rowe.*

**We have made a covenant with death and with hell are we at agreement -** עשינו חזה asinu chozeh, we have made a vision, we have had an interview, struck a bargain, and settled all preliminaries. So they had made a covenant with hell by diabolic sacrifice, כרתנו ברית carathnu beritth . "We have cut the covenant sacrifice;" they divided it for the contracting parties to pass between the separated victim; for the victim was split exactly down the middle, so that even the spinal marrow was exactly divided through its whole length; and being set opposite to each other, the contracting parties entered, one at the head part, the other at the feet; and, meeting in the center, took the covenant oath. Thus, it is intimated, these bad people made an agreement with שאול sheol, with demons, with whom they had an interview; i.e., meeting them in the covenant sacrifice! To such a pitch had the Israelitish idolatry reached at that time!



## Verse 16

**Behold, I lay in Zion** - See the notes on Genesis 49:32; Psalm 118:22; (note); Matthew 21:42; (note); Acts 4:11; (note); Romans 9:33; (note); Romans 10:11; (note); Ephesians 2:20; (note); 1 Peter 2:6-8; (note). Kimchi understands this of Hezekiah; but it most undoubtedly belongs to Jesus Christ alone; and his application of it to himself, even the Jews could not contest.

## Verse 18

**Your covenant with death shall be disannulled "Your covenant with death shall be broken"** - For כפר caphar, which seems not to belong to this place, the Chaldee reads תפר taphar, which is approved by Houbigant and Secker. See Jeremiah 33:21, where the very same phrase is used. See Prelim. Dissert. p. 1.

## Verse 20

**For the bed is shorter** - A mashal or proverbial saying, the meaning of which is, that they will find all means of defense and protection insufficient to secure them, and cover them from the evils coming upon them. מסך massek, Isaiah 22:8, the covering, is used for the outworks of defense, the barrier of the country; and here, in the allegorical sense, it means much the same thing. Their beds were only mattresses laid on the floor; and the coverlet a sheet, or in the winter a carpet, laid over it, in which the person wrapped himself. For כהתכנס kehithcannes, it ought probably to be מהתכנס mehithcannes. Houbigant, Secker.

## Verse 21

**As in Mount Perazim** - כהר kehar ; but בהר bahar, In the mount, is the reading of two of Kennicott's, one of De Rossi's, and one of my own MSS.

## Verse 22

**The Lord God** - אדני הוהי Adonai Jehovah . Adonai is omitted by four of Kennicott's MSS., and in the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic.

## Verse 23

**Give ye ear, and hear my voice "Listen ye, and hear my voice"** - The foregoing discourse, consisting of severe reproofs, and threatenings of dreadful judgments impending on the Jews for their vices, and their profane contempt of God's warnings by his messengers, the prophet concludes with an explanation

and defense of God's method of dealing with his people in an elegant parable or allegory; in which he employs a variety of images, all taken from the science of agriculture. As the husbandman uses various methods in preparing his land, and adapting it to the several kinds of seeds to be sown, with a due observation of times and seasons; and when he hath gathered in his harvest, employs methods as various in separating the corn from the straw and the chaff by different instruments, according to the nature of the different sorts of grain; so God, with unerring wisdom, and with strict justice, instructs, admonishes, and corrects his people; chastises and punishes them in various ways, as the exigence of the case requires; now more moderately, now more severely; always tempering justice with mercy; in order to reclaim the wicked, to improve the good, and, finally, to separate the one from the other.

### Verse 26

**For his God doth instruct him** - All nations have agreed in attributing agriculture, the most useful and the most necessary of all sciences, to the invention and to the suggestions of their deities. "The Most High hath ordained husbandry, "saith the son of Sirach, Ecclus. 7:15.

*Namque Ceres fertur fruges, Liberque liquoris*

*Vitigeni laticem mortalibus instituisse.*

*Lucretius, 5:14.*

"Ceres has taught mortals how to produce fruits; and Bacchus has taught them how to cultivate the vine."

Ὁ δ' ἠπίος ἀνθρώποισι -144 Δεξία σημαίνει, λαοὺς δ' ἐπὶ ἔργον ἐγείρει  
Μιμνησκῶν βιοτοιοῦ· λέγει δ' ὅτε βῶλος ἀρίστη Βουσι τε καὶ μακελῆσι· λέγει δ'  
' ὅτε δεξίαι ὥραι Καὶ φυτὰ γυρῶσαι, καὶ σπέρματα πάντα βαλεσθαι.

*Aratus, Phantom. v.*

"He, Jupiter, to the human race

Indulgent, prompts to necessary toil

Man provident of life; with kindly signs

The seasons marks, when best to turn the glebe

With spade and plough, to nurse the tender plant,

And cast o'er fostering earth the seeds abroad."

#### Verse 27-28

Four methods of threshing are here mentioned, by different instruments; the flail, the drag, the wain, and the treading of the cattle. The staff or flail was used for the *infirmiora semina*, says Jerome, the grain that was too tender to be treated in the other methods. The drag consisted of a sort of strong planks, made rough at the bottom, with hard stones or iron; it was drawn by horses or oxen over the corn sheaves spread on the floor, the driver sitting upon it. Kempfer has given a print representing the manner of using this instrument, Amaen. Exot. p. 682, fig. 3. The wain was much like the former; but had wheels with iron teeth, or edges like a saw: *Ferrata carpenta rotis per medium in serrarum modum se volventibus*. Hieron. in loc. From this it would seem that the axle was armed with iron teeth or serrated wheels throughout. See a description and print of such a machine used at present in Egypt for the same purpose in Niebuhr's Voyage en Arabie, Tab. 17 p. 123; it moves upon three rollers armed with iron teeth or wheels to cut the straw. In Syria they make use of the drag, constructed in the very same manner as above described; Niebuhr, Description de l'Arabie, p. 140. This not only forced out the grain, but cut the straw in pieces for fodder for the cattle; for in the eastern countries they have no hay. See Harmer's Observ. 1 p. 425. The last method is well known from the law of Moses, which "forbids the ox to be muzzled, when he treadeth out the corn;" Deuteronomy 25:4.

#### Verse 28

**The bread-corn** - I read ולהם *velahem*, on the authority of the Vulgate and Symmachus; the former expresses the conjunction ו *vau*, omitted in the text, by autem ; the latter by δε .

**Bruise it with his horsemen "Bruise it with the hoofs of his cattle"** - For פרשיו *parashaiv*, horsemen or teeth, read פרסיו *perasaiv*, hoofs. So the Syriac, Symmachus, Theodotion, and the Vulgate. The first is read with ש *shin*, the latter with ס *samech*, the pronunciation is nearly the same.



## **Chapter 29**

### **29. Woe against Ariel (Jerusalem)**

#### **Introduction**

Distress of Ariel, or Jerusalem, on Sennacherib's invasion, with manifest allusion, however, to the still greater distress which it suffered from the Romans, Isaiah 29:1-4. Disappointment and fall of Sennacherib described in terms, like the event, the most awful and terrible, Isaiah 29:5-8. Stupidity and hypocrisy of the Jews, Isaiah 29:9-16. Rejection of the Jews, and calling of the Gentiles, Isaiah 29:17. The chapter concludes by a recurrence to the favourite topics of the prophet, viz., the great extension of the Messiah's kingdom in the latter days, and the future restoration of Israel, Isaiah 29:18-24.

The subject of this and the four following chapters is the invasion of Sennacherib; the great distress of the Jews while it continued; their sudden and unexpected deliverance by God's immediate interposition in their favor; the subsequent prosperous state of the kingdom under Hezekiah; interspersed with severe reproofs, and threats of punishment, for their hypocrisy, stupidity, infidelity, their want of trust in God, and their vain reliance on the assistance of Egypt; and with promises of better times, both immediately to succeed, and to be expected in the future age. The whole making, not one continued discourse, but rather a collection of different discourses upon the same subject; which is treated with great elegance and variety. Though the matter is various, and the

transitions sudden, yet the prophet seldom goes far from his subject. It is properly enough divided by the chapters in the common translation. - L.

## **Verses 1-4. Jerusalem's last siege**

### **Verse 1**

**Ariel** - That Jerusalem is here called by this name is very certain: but the reason of this name, and the meaning of it as applied to Jerusalem, is very obscure and doubtful. Some, with the Chaldee, suppose it to be taken from the hearth of the great altar of burnt-offerings which Ezekiel plainly calls by the same name, and that Jerusalem is here considered as the seat of the fire of God, אֵל אִרְיָ ur el which should issue from thence to consume his enemies: compare Isaiah 31:9. Some, according to the common derivation of the word, אֵל אִרְיָ ari el, the lion of God, or the strong lion, suppose it to signify the strength of the place, by which it was enabled to resist and overcome all its enemies. Τινες δε φασι την πολιν οὕτως ειρησθαι· επει, δια Θεου, λεοντος δικην εσπαραττε τους ανταιροντας. Procop. in loc. There are other explanations of this name given: but none that seems to be perfectly satisfactory. - Lowth.

From Ezekiel 43:15, we learn that Ari-el was the name of the altar of burnt-offerings, put here for the city itself in which that altar was. In the second verse it is said, I will distress Ari-el, and it shall be unto me as Ari-el. The first Ari-el here seems to mean Jerusalem, which should be distressed by the Assyrians: the second Ari-el seems to mean the altar of burntofferings. But why is it said, "Ari-el shall be unto me as Ari-el?" As the altar of burntofferings was surrounded daily by the victims which were offered: so the walls of Jerusalem shall be surrounded by the dead bodies of those who had rebelled against the Lord, and who should be victims to his justice. The translation of Bishop Lowth appears to embrace both meanings: "I will bring distress upon Ari-el; and it shall be to me as the hearth of the great altar."

**Add ye year to year** - Ironically. Go on year after year, keep your solemn feasts; yet know, that God will punish you for your hypocritical worship, consisting of mere form destitute of true piety. Probably delivered at the time of some great feast, when they were thus employed.

### **Verse 2**

**There shall be heaviness and sorrow "There shall be continual mourning and sorrow"** - Instead of your present joy and festivity.

**And it shall be unto me as Ariel "And it shall be unto me as the hearth of the great altar"** - That is, it shall be the seat of the fire of God; which shall issue from thence to consume his enemies. See note on Isaiah 29:1; (note). Or, perhaps, all on flame; as it was when taken by the Chaldeans; or covered with carcasses and blood, as when taken by the Romans: an intimation of which more distant events, though not immediate subjects of the prophecy, may perhaps be given in this obscure passage.

### Verse 3

**And I will camp against thee round about "And I will encamp against thee like David"** - For כדור *caddur*, some kind of military engine, כדוד *kedavid*, like David, is the reading of the Septuagint, two MSS. of Kennicott's, if not two more: but though Bishop Lowth adopts this reading, I think it harsh and unnecessary.

**Forts "Towers"** - For מצרת *metsuroth*, read מצדות *metsudoth* : so the Septuagint and five MSS. of Dr. Kennicott's, one of them ancient, and four of De Rossi's.

### Verse 4

**And thy speech shall be low out of the dust "And from out of the dust thou shalt utter a feeble speech"** - That the souls of the dead uttered a feeble stridulous sound, very different from the natural human voice, was a popular notion among the heathens as well as among the Jews. This appears from several passages of their poets; Homer, Virgil, Horace. The pretenders to the art of necromancy, who were chiefly women, had an art of speaking with a feigned voice, so as to deceive those who applied to them, by making them believe that it was the voice of the ghost. They had a way of uttering sounds, as if they were formed, not by the organs of speech, but deep in the chest, or in the belly; and were thence called *εγγαστριμυθοι*, *ventriloqui*: they could make the voice seem to come from beneath the ground, from a distant part, in another direction, and not from themselves; the better to impose upon those who consulted them. Εξεπιτηδες το γενοϋ τουτο τον αμυδρον ηχον επιτηδευονται, ινα δια την ασαφειαν της φωνης τον του ψευδους αποδιδρασκωσιν ελεγχον. Psellus De Daemonibus, apud Bochart, 1 p. 731. "These people studiously acquire, and affect on purpose, this sort of obscure sound; that by the uncertainty of the voice they may the better escape being detected in the cheat. "From these arts of the necromancers the popular notion seems to have arisen, that the ghost's voice was a weak, stridulous, almost inarticulate sort of sound, very different from the speech of the living.



## Verses 5-10. The Lord will deal with Jerusalem's enemies

### Verse 5

**The multitude of thy strangers "The multitude of the proud"** - For זָרִיךְ zarayich, thy strangers, read זְדִים zedim, the proud, according to the Septuagint; parallel to and synonymous with עֲרִיצִים aritsim, the terrible, in the next line: the ר resh was at first ד daleth in a MS. See note on Isaiah 25:2.

The fifth, sixth, and seventh verses contain an admirable description of the destruction of Sennacherib's army, with a beautiful variety of the most expressive and sublime images: perhaps more adapted to show the greatness, the suddenness, and horror of the event, than the means and manner by which it was effected. Compare Isaiah 30:30-33.

### Verse 7

**As a dream** - This is the beginning of the comparison, which is pursued and applied in the next verse. Sennacherib and his mighty army are not compared to a dream because of their sudden disappearance; but the disappointment of their eager hopes is compared to what happens to a hungry and thirsty man, when he awakes from a dream in which fancy had presented to him meat and drink in abundance, and finds it nothing but a vain illusion. The comparison is elegant and beautiful in the highest degree, well wrought up, and perfectly suited to the end proposed. The image is extremely natural, but not obvious: it appeals to our inward feelings, not to our outward senses; and is applied to an event in its concomitant circumstances exactly similar, but in its nature totally different. See De S. Poes. Hebr. Praelect. 12. For beauty and ingenuity it may fairly come in competition with one of the most elegant of Virgil, greatly improved from Homer, Iliad 22:199, where he has applied to a different purpose, but not so happily, the same image of the ineffectual working of imagination in a dream: -

*Ac veluti in somnis, oculos ubi languida pressit*

*Nocte quies, necquicquam avidos extendere cursus*

*Velle videmur, et in mediis conatibus aegri*

*Succidimus; non lingua valet, non corpore notae*

*Sufficiunt vires, nec vox, nec verba sequuntur.*

*Aen., 12:908.*



"And as, when slumber seals the closing sight,  
The sick wild fancy labors in the night;  
Some dreadful visionary foe we shun  
With airy strides, but strive in vain to run;  
In vain our baffled limbs their powers essay;  
We faint, we struggle, sink, and fall away;  
Drain'd of our strength, we neither fight nor fly,  
And on the tongue the struggling accents die."

*Pitt.*

Lucretius expresses the very same image with Isaiah: -

*Ut bibere in somnis sitiens quum quaerit, et humor  
Non datur, ardorem in membris qui stingere possit;  
Sed laticum simulacra petit, frustraue laborat,  
In medioque sitit torrenti flumine potans.*

As a thirsty man desires to drink in his sleep,  
And has no fluid to allay the heat within,  
But vainly labors to catch the image of rivers,  
And is parched up while fancying that he is drinking at a full stream.

Bishop Stock's translation of the prophet's text is both elegant and just: -

"As when a hungry man dreameth; and, lo! he is eating:  
And he awaketh; and his appetite is unsatisfied.  
And as a thirsty man dreameth; and, lo! he is drinking:  
And he awaketh; and, lo! he is faint,

And his appetite craveth."

Lucretius almost copies the original.

All that fight against her and her munition "And all their armies and their towers" - For צביה ומצדתה tsobeyha umetsodathah, I read, with the Chaldee, תצבא ומצדתה tsebaam umetsodatham .

## Verse 9

**Stay yourselves, and wonder** - התמהמהו hithmahmehu, go on what-what-whatting, in a state of mental indetermination, till the overflowing scourge take you away. See the note on Psalm 119:60; (note).

**They are drunken, but not with wine** - See note on Isaiah 51:21.

**Verses 11-12. This prophesy is for the end of time**

## Verse 11

**I cannot; for it is sealed "I cannot read it; for it is sealed up"** - An ancient MS. and the Septuagint have preserved a word here, lost out of the text; לקרות likroth, (for לקראות ), αναγνῶναι, read it.

**Verses 13-16. The condition of the people**

## Verse 13

**The Lord "Jehovah"** - For אדני Adonai, sixty-three MSS. of Kennicott's, and many of De Rossi's, and four editions, read יהוה Yehovah, and five MSS. add יהוה .

Kimchi makes some just observations on this verse. The vision, meaning the Divine revelation of all the prophets, is a book or letter that is sealed - is not easily understood. This is delivered to one that is learned - instructed in the law. Read this; and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed; a full proof that he does not wish to know the contents else he would apply to the prophet to get it explained. See Kimchi on the place.

**And their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men "And vain is their fear of me teaching the commandments of men"** - I read for ותהו vattehi, ותהו vethohu, with the Septuagint, Matthew 15:9; Mark 8:7; and for מלמדה melummedah, מלמדים melummedim, with the Chaldee.

## Verses 17-24. Blessing for a redeemed remnant

### Verse 17

**And Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field "Ere Lebanon become like Carmel"** - A *mashal*, or proverbial saying, expressing any great revolution of things; and, when respecting two subjects, an entire reciprocal change: explained here by some interpreters, I think with great probability, as having its principal view beyond the revolutions then near at hand, to the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles. The first were the vineyard of God, **כרם אל** *kerem El*, (if the prophet, who loves an allusion to words of like sounds, may be supposed to have intended one here), cultivated and watered by him in vain, to be given up, and to become a wilderness: compare Isaiah 5:1-7. The last had been hitherto barren; but were, by the grace of God, to be rendered fruitful. See Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:30, Romans 11:31. Carmel stands here opposed to Lebanon, and therefore is to be taken as a proper name.

### Verse 21

**Him that reproveth in the gate "Him that pleaded in the gate"** - "They are heard by the treasurer, master of the horse, and other principal officers of the regency of Algiers, who sit constantly in the gate of the palace for that purpose:" that is, the distribution of justice. - Shaw's Travels, p. 315, fol. He adds in the note, "That we read of the elders in the gate. Deuteronomy 21:15; Deuteronomy 25:7; and, Isaiah 29:21; Amos 5:10, of him that reproveth and rebuketh in the gate. The Ottoman court likewise seems to have been called the *Porte*, from the distribution of justice and the dispatch of public business that is carried on in the gates of it."

### Verse 22

**Who redeemed Abraham** - As God redeemed Abraham from among idolaters and workers of iniquity, so will he redeem those who hear the words of the Book, and are humbled before him, Isaiah 29:18, Isaiah 29:19.

**Concerning the house of Jacob "The God of the house of Jacob"** - I read **אל** *El* as a noun, not a preposition: the parallel line favors this sense; and there is no address to the house of Jacob to justify the other.

**Neither shall his face now wax pale "His face shall no more be covered with confusion"** - **יחורו** *yechoro*, Chald. *ut ó μεταβαλει*, Theod. *εντραπησεται*, Syr. **נחפרו** *necaphro*, *videtur legendum* **יחפפרו** *yechepheru* : *hic enim solum legitur*

*verbum*, חֹר chavar, *nec in linguis affinis habet pudoris significationem.*" - Secker. "Here alone is the verb חֹר charar read; nor has it in the cognate languages the signification of shame."

## Verse 23

**But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands "For when his children shall see the work of my hands" -** For בִּירוֹתוֹ birotho I read בִּירוֹת biroth, with the Septuagint and Syriac.

## Chapter 30

### 30-31. Warning against alliance with Egypt

#### Introduction

The Jews reproved for their reliance on Egypt, Isaiah 30:1-7. Threatened for their obstinate adherence to this alliance, Isaiah 30:8-17. Images the most elegant and lofty, by which the intense gloriousness of Messiah's reign at the period when all Israel shall be added to the Church is beautifully set forth, Isaiah 30:18-26. Dreadful fall of Sennacherib's army, an event most manifestly typical of the terrible and sudden overthrow of Antichrist; as, unless this typical reference be admitted, no possible connection can be imagined between the stupendous events which took place in Hezekiah's reign, and the very remote and inconceivably more glorious displays of Divine vengeance and mercy in the days of the Messiah, Isaiah 30:27-33.

### 30:1-14. The wickedness of the pro-Egypt party

#### Verse 1

**And that cover with a covering "Who ratify covenants"** - Hebrews "Who pour out a libation." Sacrifice and libation were ceremonies constantly used, in ancient times by most nations in the ratifying of covenants: a libation therefore is used for a covenant, as in Greek the word σπονδή, for the same reason, stands for both. This seems to be the most easy explication of the Hebrew phrase, and it has the authority of the Septuagint, ἐποιήσατε συνθηκας .

#### Verse 4

**Hanes** - Six MSS. of Kennicott's, and perhaps six others, with four of De Rossi's, read חִנָּם chinnam, in vain, for הָנֵס Hanes ; and so also the Septuagint, who read likewise יָגַעוּ yageu, labored, for יָגִיעוּ yaggiu, arrived at.

## Verse 5

**Were - ashamed** - Eight MSS. (one ancient) of Kennicott's, and ten of De Rossi's, read חבִישׁ hobish, without א aleph . So the Chaldee and Vulgate.

**But a shame "But proved even a shame"** - Four MSS. (three ancient) after כִּי ki, add אִם im, unless, which seems wanted to complete the phrase in its usual form.

## Verse 6

**The burden** - מַשָּׂא massa seems here to be taken in its proper sense; the load, not the oracle. The same subject is continued; and there seems to be no place here for a new title to a distinct prophecy.

Does not burden of the beasts of the South in this place relate to the presents sent by Hoshea king of Israel to the South - to Egypt, which lay south of Judea, to engage the Egyptians to succor him against the king of Assyria?

**Into the land of trouble and anguish "Through a land of distress and difficulty"** - The same deserts are here spoken of which the Israelites passed through when they came out of Egypt, which Moses describes, Deuteronomy 8:15, as "that great and terrible wilderness wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought; where there was no water. "And which was designed to be a kind of barrier between them and Egypt, of which the Lord had said, "Ye shall henceforth return no more that way," Deuteronomy 17:16.

**Shall not profit them** - A MS. adds in the margin the word לָמוֹ lamo, them, which seems to have been lost out of the text: it is authorized by the Septuagint and Vulgate.

## Verse 7

**Their strength is to sit still "Rahab the Inactive"** - The two last words, שְׁבַת הֵם hem shabeth, joined into one, make the participle pihel המְשַׁבֵּת hammeshabbeth . I find the learned Professor Doederlein, in his version of Isaiah, and note on this place, has given the same conjecture; which he speaks of as having been formerly published by him. A concurrence of different persons in the same conjecture adds to it a greater degree of probability.

## Verse 8

**For ever and ever "For a testimony for ever"** - לעד leed . So the Syriac, Chaldee, Vulgate, and Septuagint, in MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2: εις μαρτυριον, which two words have been lost out of the other copies of the Septuagint.

## Verse 12

**In oppression "In obliquity"** - בעקש beakesh, transposing the two last letters of בעשק beoshek, in oppression, which seems not to belong to this place: a very probable conjecture of Houbigant.

## Verse 13

**Swelling out to a high wall "A swelling in a high wall"** - It has been observed before, that the buildings of Asia generally consist of little better than what we call mud walls. "All the houses at Ispahan," says Thevenot, Vol. II., p. 159, "are built of bricks made of clay and straw, and dried in the sun; and covered with a plaster made of a fine white stone. In other places in Persia the houses are built with nothing else but such bricks, made with tempered clay and chopped straw, well mingled together, and dried in the sun, and then used: but the least rain dissolves them. "Sir John Chardin's MS. remark on this place of Isaiah is very apposite: *Murs en Asie etant faits de terre se fendent ainsi par milieu et de haut en bas*. "The walls in Asia being made of earth often cleave from top to bottom." This shouts clearly how obvious and expressive the image is. The psalmist has in the same manner made use of it, to express sudden and utter destruction: -

"Ye shall be slain all of you;

Ye shall be like an inclining wall, like a shattered fence."

Psalm 62:4.

## Verse 14

**He shall not spare "And spareth it not"** - Five MSS. add the conjunction וּvau to the negative; לוּvelo .

### 30:15-33. Advice to trust in the Lord

#### Verse 17

**At the rebuke of five shall ye flee "At the rebuke of five, ten thousand of you shall flee"** - In the second line of this verse a word is manifestly omitted, which should answer to one thousand in the first: the Septuagint supply πολλοι, רבים rabbim . But the true word is רבבה rebabah, as I am persuaded any one will be convinced, who will compare the following passages with this place: -

"How should one chase a thousand;

And two put ten thousand (רבבה) to flight?"

*Deuteronomy 32:30.*

"And five of you shall chase a hundred;

And a hundred of you shall chase (רבבה) ten thousand."

*Leviticus 26:8.*

#### Verse 18

**And therefore will he be exalted "Even for this shall he expect in silence"** - For ירום yarum, he shall be exalted, which belongs not to this place, Houbigant reads ידום yadum, he shall be silent: and so it seems to be in a MS. Another MS. instead of it reads ישוב yashub, he shall return. The mistakes occasioned by the similitude of the letters ד daleth and ר resh are very frequent, as the reader may have already observed.

#### Verse 19

**For the people shall dwell in Zion "When a holy people shall dwell in Sion"** - Λαος ἅγιος, Septuagint; עם קדוש am kadosh . The word קדוש kadosh, lost out of the text, but happily supplied by the Septuagint, clears up the sense, otherwise extremely obscure. When the rest of the cities of the land were taken by the king of Assyria, Zion was preserved, and all that were in it.

**Thou shalt weep no more "Thou shalt implore him with weeping"** - The negative particle לא lo is not acknowledged by the Septuagint. It may perhaps have been written by mistake for לו lo, to him, of which there are many examples.



## Verse 20

**Though the Lord "Though Jehovah"** - For אדני Adonai, sixteen MSS. and three editions have יהוה Yehovah, many of De Rossi's have the same reading; all my own have יהוה Yehovah .

## Verse 21

**When ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left "Turn not aside, to the right or to the left"** - The Syriac Chaldee, and Vulgate, translate as if, instead of כִּי-יָמִינִי ki -vechi, they read לוֹ-לְאַחֲרָי lo -velo .

## Verse 22

**Ye shall defile "Ye shall treat as defiled"** - The very prohibition of Moses, Deuteronomy 7:25, only thrown out of the prose into the poetical form: "The graven images of their gods ye shall burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or the gold that is on them; nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to Jehovah thy God."

## Verse 25

**When the towers fall "When the mighty fall"** - מגדלים migdalim, μεγάλους, Sym.; μεγαλυνομενους, Aquila; רַבְרֵבִין rabrebin, Chard.; all signifying mighty sizes.

## Verse 26

**Shall be sevenfold** - The text adds כֶּאוֹר שִׁבְעַת הַיָּמִים keor shibath haiyamayim, "as the light of seven days, "a manifest gloss, taken in from the margin; it is not in most of the copies of the Septuagint. It interrupts the rhythmical construction, and obscures the sense by a false, or at least an unnecessary, interpretation.

By moon, sun, light, are to be understood the abundance of spiritual and temporal felicity with which God should bless them in the days of the Messiah, which should be sevenfold, i.e. vastly exceed all that they had ever before possessed.

## Verse 27

**And the burden thereof is heavy "And the flame raged violently"** - מִשָּׂאָה massaah ; this word seems to be rightly rendered in our translation, the flame,

Judges 20:38, Judges 20:40, etc.; a sign of fire, Jeremiah 6:1; called properly מַשְׁעֵת masseeth, an elevation, from its tending upwards.

## Verse 28

**To sift the nations with a sieve of vanity "To toss the nations with the van of perdition"** - The word להנפה lahanaphah is in its form very irregular. Kimchi says it is for להניף lehaniph. Houbigant supposes it to be a mistake, and shows the cause of it; the joining it to the ה he, which should begin the following word. The true reading is להניף הגוים lehaniph haggoyim, "to sift the nations."

The Vulgate seems to be the only one of the ancient interpreters who has explained rightly the sense; but he has dropped the image: *ad perdendas gentes in nihilum*, "to reduce the nations to nothing." Kimchi's explanation is to the following effect: "נפה naphah is a van with which they winnow corn; and its use is to cleanse the corn from the chaff and straw: but the van with which God will winnow the nations will be the van of emptiness or perdition; for nothing useful shall remain behind, but all shall come to nothing, and perish. In like manner, a bridle is designed to guide the horse in the right way; but the bridle which God will put in the jaws of the people shall not direct them aright, but shall make them err, and lead them into destruction." This latter image the prophet has applied to the same subject afterwards, Isaiah 37:29; :-

"I will put my bridle in thy jaws, And turn thee back by the way in which thou camest."

And as for the former it is to be observed, that the van of the ancients was a large instrument, somewhat like a shovel, with a long handle, with which they tossed the corn mixed with the chaff and chopped straw into the air, that the wind might separate them. See Hammond on Matthew 3:12.

**There shall be a bridle in the jaws** - A metaphor taken from a headstrong, unruly horse: the bridle checks, restrains, and directs him.

What the true God does in restraining sinners has been also attributed to the false gods of the heathen. Thus Aeschylus, prom. Vinct. 691: -

αλλ' ἐπηναγκαζε νιν 216 Διος χαλινος προς βιαν πρασσειν ταδε.

"But the bridle of Jupiter violently constrained him to do these things."

## Verse 30

**The Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard** - Kimchi understands this of the great destruction of the Assyrian host by the angel of the Lord. Instead of **אֶץ** bezaaph ats, "with swift anger," five of Dr. Kennicott's MSS. and one of my own, read **אֶף** bezaam aph, "with detestation indignant." For **אֶץ** ats, "swift," which is the common reading, forty-two of Kennicott's, forty-three of De Rossi's, and two of my own, have **אֶף** ats, "wrath or fury." The former reading, **אֶץ** ats, is not found in any Bible previously to that of Van der Hooght, in 1705; and there it seems to be a typographical mistake.

## Verse 31

**Which smote with a rod "He that was ready to smite with his staff"** - "Post **אֶשְׁשׁוּר** ashshur, *forte excidit* **אֶשֶׁר** asher ." - Secker. After **אֶשְׁשׁוּר** ashshur, probably **אֶשֶׁר** asher, "which," has been omitted.

## Verse 32

**The grounded staff "The rod of his correction"** - For **מוֹסָדָה** musadah, the grounded staff, of which no one yet has been able to make any tolerable sense, Le Clerc conjectured **מוֹסָרָה** musarah, of correction; (see Proverbs 22:15;); and so it is in two MSS., (one of them ancient), and seems to be so in the Bodleian MS. The Syriac has **דֶּשֶׁה בְּדָה** deshuebedah, *Virgo domans, vet subjectionis*, "the taming rod, or rod of subjection."

**With tabrets and harps** - With every demonstration of joy and thanksgiving for the destruction of the enemy in so wonderful a manner: with hymns of praise, accompanied with musical instruments. See Isaiah 30:29.

**With it "Against them"** - For **בָּהּ** bah . against her, fifty-two MSS. and five editions read **בָּם** bam, against them.

## Verse 33

**For Tophet is ordained** - Tophet is a valley very near to Jerusalem, to the southeast, called also the valley of Hinnom or Gehenna; where the Canaanites, and afterwards the Israelites, sacrificed their children, by making them pass through the fire, that is, by burning them in the fire, to Molech, as some suppose. It is therefore used for a place of punishment by fire; and by our blessed Savior in the Gospel for hell-fire, as the Jews themselves had applied it. See Chald. on Isaiah 33:14, where **מוֹקְדֵי עֹלָם** mokedey olam is rendered "the Gehenna of

everlasting fire." Here the place where the Assyrian army was destroyed is called Tophet by a metonymy; for the Assyrian army was destroyed probably at a greater distance from Jerusalem, and quite on the opposite side of it: for Nob is mentioned as the last station, from which the king of Assyria should threaten Jerusalem, Isaiah 10:32, where the prophet seems to have given a very exact chorographical description of his march in order to attack the city; which however he never reached. -

## **Chapter 31**

### **Introduction**

The Jews again reproved for their confidence in Egypt, finely contrasted with their neglect of the power and protection of God, Isaiah 31:1-3. Deliverance and protection are, notwithstanding, promised, expressed by two similes; the first remarkably lofty and poetical, the latter singularly beautiful and tender, Isaiah 31:4, Isaiah 31:5. Exhortation to repentance, joined with the prediction of a more reformed period, Isaiah 31:6, Isaiah 31:7. This chapter concludes like the preceding, with a prophecy of the fall of Sennacherib, Isaiah 31:8, Isaiah 31:9.

### **31:1-9. The woe of trusting Egypt again outlined**

#### **Verse 1**

**Woe to them that go down to Egypt** - This is a reproof to the Israelites for forming an alliance with the Egyptians, and not trusting in the Lord.

**And stay on horses "Who trust in horses"** - For ועל veal, and upon, first twenty MSS. of Kennicott's, thirty of De Rossi's, one of my own, and the Septuagint, Arabic, and Vulgate, read על al, upon, without the conjunction, which disturbs the sense.

#### **Verse 2**

**His words "His word"** - דברו debaro, singular, without י yod, two MSS. of Dr. Kennicott's the Septuagint, and Targ. Hieros. דרכיו derachaiv, his ways, is found in one MS.

#### **Verse 3**

He that helpeth (the Egyptians) shall fall and he that is holpen (the Israelites) shall fall down-together.

#### Verse 4

**Like as the lion** - This comparison is exactly in the spirit and manner, and very nearly approaching to the expression, of Homer.

Βη ρ ' ιμεν, ὥστε λεων ορεσιτροφος, ὅστ ' επιδευηςπ  
Δηρον εη κρειων, κελεται δε ε θυμος αγηνωρ,π  
Μηλων πειρησοντα, και ες πυκινον δομον ελθειν·π  
Ειπερ γαρ χ ' εύρησι παρ ' αυτοψι βωτορας ανδραςπ  
Συν κυσι και δουρεσσι φυλασσοντας περι μηλα,π  
Ου ρα τ ' απειρητος μεμονε σταθμοιο διεσθαι.π  
Αλλ ' ὄγ ' ἀρ η ήρπαξε μεταλμενος, ηε και αυτοςπ  
Εβλητ ' εν πρωτοισι θοης απο χειρος ακοντι.

*Iliad 12:299.*

As the bold lion, mountain-bred, now long  
Famished, with courage and with hunger stung  
Attempts the thronged fold: him nought appals,  
Though dogs and armed shepherds stand in guard  
Collected; he nathless undaunted springs  
O'er the high fence, and rends the trembling prey;  
Or, rushing onward, in his breast receives  
The well-aimed spear.

Of metaphors, allegories, and comparisons of the Hebrew poets, in which the Divine nature and attributes are represented under images taken from brutes and other low objects; of their effect, their sublimity, and the causes of it; see De Sac. Poes. Heb., Praelect. 16 sub. fin.

## Verse 5

**Passing over "Leaping forward"** - The generality of interpreters observe in this place an allusion to the deliverance which God vouchsafed to his people when he destroyed the first-born of the Egyptians, and exempted those of the Israelites sojourning among them by a peculiar interposition. The same word is made use of here which is used upon that occasion, and which gave the name to the feast which was instituted in commemoration of that deliverance, פסח *pesach*. But the difficulty is to reconcile the commonly received meaning of that word with the circumstances of the similitude here used to illustrate the deliverance represented as parallel to the deliverance in Egypt.

"As the mother birds hovering over their young,

So shall Jehovah God of hosts protect Jerusalem;

Protecting and delivering, passing over, and rescuing her."

This difficulty is, I think, well solved by Vitringa, whose remark is the more worthy of observation, as it leads to the true meaning of an important word, which hitherto seems greatly to have been misunderstood, though Vitringa himself, as it appears to me, has not exactly enough defined the precise meaning of it. He says, "פסח *pasach* signifies to cover, to protect by covering: σκεπασω ὑμας, Septuagint. Jehovah *obteget ostium*; 'The Lord will cover or protect the door:'" whereas it means that particular action or motion by which God at that time placed himself in such a situation as to protect the house of the Israelite against the destroying angel; to spring forward, to throw one's self in the way, in order to cover and protect. Cocceius comes nearer to the true meaning than Vitringa, by rendering it *gradum facere*, to march, to step forward; Lexicon in voc. The common meaning of the word פסח *pasach* upon other occasions is to halt, to be lame, to leap, as in a rude manner of dancing, (as the prophets of Baal did, 1 Kings 18:26;), all which agrees very well together; for the motion of a lame person is a perpetual springing forward, by throwing himself from the weaker upon the stronger leg. The common notion of God's passage over the houses of the Israelites is, that in going through the land of Egypt to smite the first-born, seeing the blood on the door of the houses of the Israelites, he passed over, or skipped, those houses, and forbore to smite them. But that this is not the true notion of the thing, will be plain from considering the words of the sacred historian, where he describes very explicitly the action: "For Jehovah will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood on the lintels and on the two side posts, Jehovah will spring forward over (or before) the door, ופסח יהוה על הפתח *upasach Yehovah al happethach*, and will not suffer the

destroyer to come into your houses to smite you, " Exodus 12:23. Here are manifestly two distinct agents, with which the notion of passing over is not consistent, for that supposes but one agent. The two agents are the destroying angel passing through to smite every house, and Jehovah the Protector keeping pace with him; and who, seeing the door of the Israelite marked with the blood, the token prescribed, leaps forward, throws himself with a sudden motion in the way, opposes the destroying angel, and covers and protects that house against the destroying angel, nor suffers him to smite it. In this way of considering the action, the beautiful similitude of the bird protecting her young answers exactly to the application by the allusion to the deliverance in Egypt. As the mother bird spreads her wings to cover her young, throws herself before them, and opposes the rapacious bird that assaults them, so shall Jehovah protect, as with a shield, Jerusalem from the enemy, protecting and delivering, springing forward and rescuing her; ὑπερβαινων, as the three other Greek interpreters, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, render it. The Septuagint, περιποιησεται instead of which MS. Pachom. has περιβησεται, *circumeundo proteget*, "in going about he shall protect, "which I think is the true reading. - Homer, 2 viii. 329, expresses the very same image by this word: -

Αιας δ' οὐκ ἀμελήσῃ κασιγνητοῖο πέσοντος,-144 Ἀλλὰ θεῶν περιβῇ, καὶ οἱ  
σακὸς ἀμφεκαλύψῃ :

" - But Ajax his broad shield displayed,

And screened his brother with a mighty shade."

- Ὅς Χρυσὴν ἀμφιβέβηκας.

*Il. 1:37*

Which the scholiast explains by περιβεβηκας, ὑπερμαχεις, i.e., "Thou who strictly guardest Chryses." - L. On this verse Kimchi says, "The angel of the Lord which destroyed the Assyrians is compared to a lion, Isaiah 31:4, for his strength: and here ( Isaiah 31:5;) to flying birds, for his swiftness."

## Verse 6

**Have deeply revolted "Have so deeply engaged in revolt"** - All the ancient Versions read תַּמִּיקוּ taamiku, in the second person, instead of הִמִּיקוּ heemiku, they have deeply revolted, etc.



## Verse 7

**Which your own hands have made unto you for a sin "The sin, which their own hands have made"** - The construction of the word חטא chet, sin, in this place is not easy. The Septuagint have omitted it: MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2 and Cod. Marchal. *in margine*, supply the omission by the word ἁμαρτιαν, sin, or ἁμαρτημα, said to be from Aquila's Version, which I have followed. The learned Professor Schroeder, Institut. Ling. Hebrews p. 298, makes it to be *in regimine* with ידיכם yedeychem, as an epithet, your sinful hands. The Septuagint render the pronoun in the third person, αἱ χεῖρες αὐτῶν, their hands; and an ancient MS. has, agreeable to that rendering, להם lahem, to them, for לכם lachem, to you; which word they have likewise omitted, as not necessary to complete the sense.

## Verse 8

**Then shall the Assyrian fall, etc.** - Because he was to be discomfited by the angel of the Lord, destroying in his camp, in one night, upwards of one hundred and eighty thousand men; and Sennacherib himself fell by the hands of the princes, his own sons. Not mighty men, for they were not soldiers; not mean men, for they were princes.

## Chapter 32

### Introduction

### 32. Messiah-King and His kingdom

Prophecy of great prosperity under Hezekiah; but, in its highest sense, applicable to Christ, Isaiah 32:1-8. Description of impending calamities, Isaiah 32:9-14. Rejection of the Jews, and calling of the Gentiles, Isaiah 32:15. The future prosperity of the Church, Isaiah 32:16-20.

### Verses 1-8. Israel's ultimate deliverance by Messiah-King

#### Verse 1

**Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness** - If King Hezekiah were a type of Christ, then this prophecy may refer to his time; but otherwise it seems to have Hezekiah primarily in view. It is evident, however, that in the fullest sense these words cannot be applied to any man; God alone can do all that is promised here.

**And princes** - ושרים ve -sarim, without ל lamed, to; so the ancient Versions. An ancient MS. has ושריו vesaraiv, and his princes.

## Verse 2

**As the shadow of a great rock** - The shadow of a great projecting rock is the most refreshing that is possible in a hot country, not only as most perfectly excluding the rays of the sun, but also as having in itself a natural coolness, which it reflects and communicates to every thing about it.

*Speluncaeque tegant, et saxea procubet umbra.*

*Virg. Georg. 3:145.*

"Let the cool cave and shady rock protect them."

Επει κεφαλην και γουνατα Σειριος αζει, -144 Αναλεος δε τε χρωσ απο καυματος· αλλα τοτ ' ηδη Ειη πετραιη τε σκιν, και Βιβλινος οινοςπ .

*Hesiod. 2:206.*

"When Sirius rages, and thine aching head,

Parched skin, and feeble knees refreshment need;

Then to the rock's projected shade retire,

With Biblin wine recruit thy wasted powers."

## Verse 3

**And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim "And him the eyes of those that see shall regard"** - For ולא velo, and not, Le Clerc reads ולו velo, and to him, of which mistake the Masoretes acknowledge there are fifteen instances; and many more are reckoned by others. The removal of the negative restores to the verb its true and usual sense.

## Verse 5

**The vile person shall no more be called liberal** - The different epithets here employed require minute explanation.

The vile person - נָבָל nabal, the pampered, fattened, brainless fellow, who eats to live, and lives to eat; who will scarcely part with any thing, and that which he does give he gives with an evil eye and a grudging heart.

Liberal - נָדִיב nadib ; the generous, openhearted, princely man, who writes on all his possessions, For myself and mankind, and lives only to get and to do good.

The churl - כִּילַי kilai, the avaricious man; he who starves himself amidst his plenty, and will not take the necessaries of life for fear of lessening his stock.

Thus he differs from נָבָל nabal, who feeds himself to the full, and regards no one else; like the rich man in the Gospel. The avaricious man is called כִּילַי kilai, from כִּי ki, for, לִי li, myself; or contracted from כָּל col, all, and לִי li, to myself: all is mine; all I have is my own; and all I can get is for myself: and yet this man enjoys nothing; he withholds

From back and belly too their proper fare: -

O cursed lust of gold, when for thy sake

The wretch throws up his interest in both worlds,

First starved in this, then damned in that to come!

Bountiful - שׂוֹעַ shoa, he who is abundantly rich; who rejoices in his plenty, and deals out to the distressed with a liberal hand.

## Verse 6

**The vile person will speak villany "The fool will still utter folly"** - A sort of proverbial saying, which Euripides (Bacchae, 369) has expressed in the very same manner and words: Μῶρα γὰρ μωρὸς λεγεί· "The fool speaks folly. "Of this kind of simple and unadorned proverb or parable, see De S. Poes, Hebr. Praelect. xxiv.

**Against the Lord "Against Jehovah"** - For אֵל El, two MSS. read אַל al, more properly; but both are of nearly the same meaning.

## Verse 7

**The instruments also of the churl are evil "As for the niggard, his instruments are evil"** - His machinations, his designs. The paronomasia, which the prophet frequently deals in, suggested this expression וְכֵלָיו vechelai

kelaiv . The first word is expressed with some variety in the MSS. Seven MSS. read וכילי vekili, one וכל vechol, another וכולי vecoli .

**To destroy the poor with lying words "To defeat the assertions of the poor in judgment"** - A word seems to have been lost here, and two others to have suffered a small alteration, which has made the sentence very obscure. The Septuagint have happily retained the rendering of the lost word, and restored the sentence in all its parts: Και διασκαδασαι λογους ταπεινων εν κρισει· אביון במשפט אלהפר דברי ulehapher dibrey ebyon bemishpat, "And disperse the words of the poor in judgment. "They frequently render the verb הִפָּר haphar by διασκαδασαι, A MS. reads ולדבר uledabber, which gives authority for the preposition ל lamed, to, necessary to the sense, and the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee read במשפט bemishpat, In judgment.

## Verse 8

**Liberal things "Generous purposes"** - "Of the four sorts of persons mentioned Isaiah 32:5, three are described, Isaiah 32:6, Isaiah 32:7, and Isaiah 32:8, but not the fourth." - Secker. Perhaps for והוא vehu, and he, we ought to read ושוע veshoa, the bountiful.

## Verses 9-14. Israel's interim sins and sufferings outlined

### Verse 9

**Rise up, ye women "ye provinces. "Ye careless daughters "ye cities."** - Targum.

From this verse to the end of the fourteenth, the desolation of Judea by the Chaldeans appears to be foretold.

### Verse 11

**Gird sackcloth** - שק sak, sackcloth, a word necessary to the sense, is here lost, but preserved by the Septuagint, MSS. Alex. and Pachom., and 1. D. II., and edit. Ald. and Comp., and the Arabic and Syriac.

**Tremble - be troubled - strip you** - פשטה peshotah, רגזה regazah, etc. These are infinitives, with a paragogic ה he, according to Schultens, Institut. Ling. Hebr. p. 453, and are to be taken in an imperative sense.

## Verse 12

**They shall lament - for the pleasant fields "Mourn ye for the pleasant field"**

- The Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read ספדו siphdu, mourn ye, imperative; twelve MSS., (five ancient), two editions, the Septuagint, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, Syriac, and Vulgate, all read שדה sadeh, a field; not שדי shedey, breasts.

## Verse 13

**Shall come up thorns and briers "The thorn and the brier shall come up" -**

All the ancient Versions read ושמיר veshamir, with the conjunction. And an ancient MS. has תעלה בו taaleh bo, "shall come up in it, "which seems to be right; or rather בה bah : and there is a rasure in the place of בו bo in another ancient MS.

**Yea, upon all the houses of joy -** For כי ki, the ancient Versions, except the Vulgate, seem to have read ו ve . כי ki may perhaps be a mistake for בו bo, or בה bah, in it, above mentioned. It is not necessary in this place.

The description of impending distress which begins at Isaiah 32:13; belongs to other times than that of Sennacherib's invasion, from which they were so soon delivered. It must at least extend to the ruin of the country and city by the Chaldeans. And the promise of blessings which follows was not fulfilled under the Mosaic dispensation; they belong to the Kingdom of Messiah. Compare Isaiah 32:15; with Isaiah 29:17; (note), and see the note there.

## Verse 14

**The palaces shall be forsaken -** The house of the sanctuary (the temple) shall be destroyed. - Targum.

**The forts "Ophel" -** It was a part of Mount Zion, rising higher than the rest, at the eastern extremity, near to the temple, a little to the south of it; called by Micah, Micah 4:8, "Ophel of the daughter of Zion. "It was naturally strong by its situation; and had a wall of its own, by which it was separated from the rest of Zion.

## **Verses 15-20. Hope for the future – the outpoured spirit and the result**

### **Verse 15**

**And the fruitful field** - והכרמל vehaccarmel . So fifteen MSS., six ancient, and two editions; which seems to make the noun an appellative.

### **Verse 17**

**The work of righteousness** - Righteousness works and produces peace.

**The effect of righteousness** - עבדת abodath, the culture. Righteousness, cultivated by peace, produces tranquillity of mind and permanent security. Reader, hast thou the principle? If so, dost thou cultivate it? If thou dost, thou hast peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and a sure and certain hope of everlasting life.

### **Verse 19**

**The city shalt be low all a low place. "The city shall be laid level with the plain"** - For ובשפלה ubashephelah, the Syriac reads וכשפלה ukeshephelah . The city - probably Nineveh or Babylon: but this verse is very obscure. Saltus; Assyriorum regnum: civitas; magnifica Assyriorum castra. Ephrem Syr. ire loc. For וברד ubarad, a MS. has וירד vaiyered ; and so conjectured Abp. Secker, referring to Zechariah 11:2.

### **Verse 20**

**That sow beside all waters "Who sow your seed in every well-watered place"** - Sir John Chardin's note on this place is: "This exactly answers the manner of planting rice; for they sow it upon the water, and before sowing, while the earth is covered with water, they cause the ground to be trodden by oxen, horses, and asses, who go mid-leg deep; and this is the way of preparing the ground for sowing. As they sow the rice on the water, they transplant it in the water. "Harmer's Observ. vol. 1 p. 280. "Rice is the food of two-thirds of mankind." Dr. Arbuthnot. "It is cultivated in most of the eastern countries." Miller. "It is good for all, and at all times." Sir J. Chardin, ib. "*Le ris, qui est leur principal aliment et leur froment (i.e., des Siamois), n'est jamais assez arrose; il croit au milieu de l'eau, et les campagnes ou on le cultive ressemblent plutot a de marets que non pas a des terres qu'on laboure avec la charue. Le ris a bien cette force, que quoy qu'il y ait six ou sept pieds d'eau sur lui, il pousse toujours sa tige au dessus; et le tuyau qui le porte s'eleve et croit a proportion de la*



*hauteur de l'eau qui noye son champ. Voyage de l'Eveque de Beryte, p. 144. Paris, 1666. - L. "Rice, which is the principal grain and aliment of the Siamese, can never be too much watered. It grows in the water, and the fields where it is sown resemble marshes rather than fields cultivated by ploughing. Rice has that property that although it be covered with water six or seven feet deep, yet it raises its stalk above it; and this grows long in proportion to the depth of the water by which the field is inundated."*



*Oleander flowers in the desert*

## **Chapter 33**

### **Introduction**

### **33. Punishment of the Assyrian triumph of Christ**

This chapter contains the sequel of the prophecy respecting Sennacherib. The prophet addresses himself to the Assyrian monarch, Isaiah 33:1-4. The mercy and power of God acknowledged by the Jews, Isaiah 33:5, Isaiah 33:6. Distress and despair of the Jews at the approach of Sennacherib, Isaiah 33:7-9. Gracious



promise of deliverance, Isaiah 33:10-13. Dreadful apprehensions of the wicked, and security of the righteous, Isaiah 33:14-17. The security of the Jews under the reign of Hezekiah, and the wretched condition of Sennacherib and his army, Isaiah 33:18-24.

The plan of the prophecy continued in this chapter, and which is manifestly distinct from the foregoing, is peculiarly elegant. To set it in a proper light, it will be necessary to mark the transitions from one part of it to another.

In Isaiah 33:1, the prophet addresses himself to Sennacherib, briefly, but strongly and elegantly, expressing the injustice of his ambitious designs, and the sudden disappointments of them.

In Isaiah 33:2, the Jews are introduced offering up their earnest supplications to God in their present distressful condition; with expressions of their trust and confidence in his protection.

In Isaiah 33:3; and Isaiah 33:4; the prophet in the name of God, or rather God himself, is introduced addressing himself to Sennacherib, and threatening him that, notwithstanding the terror which he had occasioned in the invaded countries, yet he should fall, and become an easy prey to those whom he had intended to subdue.

In Isaiah 33:5; and Isaiah 33:6, a chorus of Jews is introduced, acknowledging the mercy and power of God, who had undertaken to protect them; extolling it with direct opposition to the boasted power of their enemies, and celebrating the wisdom and piety of their king Hezekiah, who had placed his confidence in the favor of God.

Then follows, in Isaiah 33:7, Isaiah 33:8, and Isaiah 33:9, a description of the distress and despair of the Jews, upon the king of Assyria's marching against Jerusalem, and sending his summons to them to surrender, after the treaty he had made with Hezekiah on the conditions of his paying, as he actually did pay to him, three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. 2 Kings 18:14-16.

In Isaiah 33:10, God himself is again introduced, declaring that he will interpose in this critical situation of affairs, and disappoint the vain designs of the enemies of his people, by discomfiting and utterly consuming them.

Then follows, Isaiah 33:11-22, still in the person of God, which however falls at last into that of the prophet, a description of the dreadful apprehensions of the wicked in those times of distress and imminent danger; finely contrasted with

the confidence and security of the righteous, and their trust in the promises of God that he will be their never-failing strength and protector.

The whole concludes, in the person of the prophet, with a description of the security of the Jews under the protection of God, and of the wretched state of Sennacherib and his army, wholly discomfited, and exposed to be plundered even by the weakest of the enemy.

Much of the beauty of this passage depends on the explanation above given of Isaiah 33:3; and Isaiah 33:4, as addressed by the prophet, or by God himself, to Sennacherib; not as it is usually taken, as addressed by the Jews to God, Isaiah 33:3, and then Isaiah 33:4, as addressed to the Assyrians. To set this in a clear light, it may be of use to compare it with a passage of the Prophet Joel; where, speaking of the destruction caused by the locusts, he sets in the same strong light of opposition as Isaiah does here, the power of the enemy, and the power of Jehovah, who would destroy that enemy. Thus Isaiah to Sennacherib: -

"When thou didst raise thyself up, the nations were dispersed" -

*Isaiah 33:3.*

"But now will I arise, saith Jehovah; Now will I be exalted."

*Isaiah 33:10.*

And thus Joel, Joel 2:20, Joel 2:21; : -

"His stink shall come up, and his ill savor shall ascend; Though he hath done great things. Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice; For Jehovah will do great things."

## **Verses 1-12. The destruction of the Assyrian declared**

### **Verse 1**

**And dearest treacherously "Thou plunderer"** - See note on Isaiah 21:2; (note).

**When thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously "When thou art weary of plundering"** - "כנלתיך *cannelothecha*, *alibi non extat in s. s. nisi f.* Job 15:29; - *simplicius est legere* ככלתיך *kechallothecha* . Vid. Capell.; *nec repugnat* Vitringa. Vid. Daniel 9:24. כלה *calah* הַתִּים *hatim* ." - Secker.

## Verse 2

**Be thou their arm every morning "Be thou our strength every morning" -** For זרעם zeroam, their arm, the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate read זרענו zeroenu, our arm, in the first person of the pronoun, not the third: the edition of Felix Pratensis has זרעתינו zerootheynu in the margin.

The prophet is here praying against the enemies of God's people; and yet this part of the prayer seems to be in their behalf: but from the above authorities it appears that Our arm is the true reading, though I do not find it confirmed by any of Kennicott's, De Rossi's, or my own MSS. My old MS. Bible has, - Be thou oure arm in erly.

## Verse 3

**At the noise of the tumult "From thy terrible voice" -** For המון hamon, "multitude," the Septuagint and Syriac read אמיק amica, "terrible," whom I follow.

## Verse 6

**His treasure "Thy treasure" -** Ὁθησαυρος οὗτος, Sym. He had in his copy אצרך otsarcha, "thy treasure, "not אצרו otsaro, "his treasure."

## Verse 7

**Their valiant ones shall cry without "The mighty men raise a grievous cry" -** Three MSS. read ארלים erelim, that is, lions of God, or strong lions. So they called valiant men heroes; which appellation the Arabians and Persians still use. See Bochart. Hieroz. Part 1 lib. 3 cap. 1. "*Mahomet, ayant reconnu Hamzeh son oncle pour homme de courage et de valeur, lui donne le titre ou surnom d'Assad Allah, qui signifie le lion de Dieu.*" D'Herbelot, p. 427. And for חצה chatsah, the Syriac and Chaldee, read קשה kashah, whom I follow. The Chaldee, Syriac, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion read אראה ereh lahem, or יראה yireh, with what meaning is not clear.

The word ארלם erellam, which we translate valiant ones, is very difficult; no man knows what it means. Kimchi supposes that it is the name of the angel that smote the Assyrian camp! The Vulgate, and my old MS., translate it seers; and most of the Versions understand it in this way. None of the MSS. give us any help, but as we see above in Lowth.

## Verse 9

**Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits "Bashan and Carmel are stripped of their beauty"** - Φανερα εσται, made manifest. Sept. They read ונערה veneerah .

## Verse 11

**Your breath "And my spirit"** - "For רוחי רוחכם ruchechem, your spirit, read רוחי כמו ruchi kemo . "Secker. Which reading is confirmed by the Chaldee, where מימרי meymri, "my word, "answers to רוחי ruchi, "my spirit."

## Verses 13-16. The plight of the godless in the face of the Assyrian menace

### Verse 14

**The sinners in Zion are afraid** - Zion has been generally considered as a type of the Church of God. Now all the members of God's Church should be holy, and given to good works; sinners in Zion, therefore, are portentous beings! but, alas! where are they not? The Targum on this verse is worthy of notice: "The sinners in Zion are broken down; fear hath seized the ungodly, who are suffering for their ways. They say, Who among us shall dwell in Zion, where the splendor of the Divine Majesty is like a consuming fire? Who of us shall dwell in Jerusalem, where the ungodly are judged and delivered into hell for an eternal burning?" Everduryngne brennyngis. Old MS. Bible.

### Verse 15

**That stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood "Who stoppeth his ears to the proposal of bloodshed"** - A MS. reads בדמים bedamim, "in blood."

## Verses 17-24. Salvation by seeing Messiah-King in His beauty

### Verse 18

**Where is the scribe?** - The person appointed by the king of Assyria to estimate their number and property in reference to their being heavily taxed.

**Where is the receiver?** - Or he who was to have collected this tribute.

**Where is he that counted the towers?** - That is, the commander of the enemy's forces, who surveyed the fortifications of the city, and took an account of the height, strength, and situation of the walls and towers, that he might know where

to make the assault with the greatest advantage; as Capaneus before Thebes is represented in a passage of the Phoenissae of Euripides, which Grotius has applied as an illustration of this place: -

Εκεινος ἑπτα προσβασεις τεκμαιρεται-144 Πυργων, ανω τε και κατω τειχη μετρων.

*Ver. 187.*

"To these seven turrets each approach he marks;

The walls from their proud summit to their base

Measuring with eager eye."

He that counted the towers "Those who were ordered to review the fortified places in Judea, that they might be manned and provisioned for the king of Assyria. So sure was he of gaining Jerusalem and subduing the whole of Judea, that he had already formed all these arrangements." - Dodd's notes.

## **Verse 20**

**Look upon Zion "Thou shalt see Zion"** - For חזה chazeh, "see," read תחזה techezeh, "thou shalt see," with the Chaldee. - Houbigant. At the end of this verse we find in the Masoretic Bibles this note, חצי הספר chatsi hassepher, "the middle of the book;" that is the middle of the book of Isaiah.

## **Verse 21**

**The glorious Lord "The glorious name of Jehovah"** - I take שם shem for a noun, with the Septuagint and Syriac. See Psalm 20:1; Proverbs 18:10.

## **Verse 23**

**Thy tacklings are loosed** - Here the Assyrians are represented under the figure of a ship wrecked by a violent storm; and the people on the beach, young, old, feeble, and diseased, gathering the spoil without any to hinder them. Kimchi, who understands the whole of this chapter of Hezekiah and the king of Assyria, says, "There are others of our rabbins who apply it all to the days of the Messiah."

**Their mast "Thy mast"** - For תרנם tornam, "their mast," the Syriac reads תרניך torneycha, "thy mast;" the Septuagint and Vulgate, תרנך tornecha, ὁ ἰστος σου ἐκλίπεν, "thy mast is fallen aside." - Septuagint.

They seem to have read נטה natah or פנה panah, תרנך tornecha, or rather, לא כן lo con, "is not firm," the negative having been omitted in the present text by mistake. However, I have followed their sense, which seems very probable, as the present reading is to me extremely obscure.

## Verse 24

**And the inhabitant shall not say** - This verse is somewhat obscure. The meaning of it seems to be, that the army of Sennacherib shall by the stroke of God be reduced to so shattered and so weak a condition, that the Jews shall fall upon the remains of them, and plunder them without resistance; that the most infirm and disabled of the people of Jerusalem shall come in for their share of the spoil; the lame shall seize the prey; even the sick and the diseased shall throw aside their infirmities, and recover strength enough to hasten to the general plunder. See above.

The last line of the verse is parallel to the first, and expresses the same sense in other words. Sickness being considered as a visitation from God, a punishment of sin; the forgiveness of sin is equivalent to the removal of a disease. Thus the psalmist: -

"Who forgiveth all thy sin; And healeth all thine infirmities."

*Psalm 103:3.*

Where the latter line only varies the expression of the former. And our blessed Savior reasons with the Jews on the same principle: "Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?" Mark 2:9. See also Matthew 8:17; Isaiah 53:4. *Qui locus Isaiae, 1 Peter 2:24, refertur ad remissionem peccatorum: hic vero ad sanationem morborum, quia ejusdem potentiae et bonitatis est utrumque praestare; et, quia peccatis remissis, et morbi, qui fructus sunt peccatorum, pelluntur.* "Which passage of Isaiah has reference, in 1 Peter 2:24, to the remission of sins, and here to the healing of diseases, because both are effects of the same power and goodness; and because with the remission of sins was associated the removal of disorders, the fruits of sin." - Wetstein on Matthew 8:17.

That this prophecy was exactly fulfilled, I think we may gather from the history of this great event given by the prophet himself. It is plain that Hezekiah, by his treaty with Sennacherib, by which he agreed to pay him three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold, had stripped himself of his whole treasure. He not only gave him all the silver and gold that was in his own treasury and in that of the temple, but was even forced to cut off the gold from the doors of the temple and from the pillars, with which he had himself overlaid them, to satisfy the demands of the king of Assyria: but after the destruction of the Assyrian army, we find that he "had exceeding much riches, and that he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, "etc. 2 Chronicles 32:27. He was so rich, that out of pride and vanity he displayed his wealth to the ambassadors from Babylon. This cannot be otherwise accounted for, than by the prodigious spoil that was taken on the destruction of the Assyrian army. And thus, in the providence of God, he had the wealth which was exacted from him restored.

## **Chapter 34**

### **34. Armageddon and the destruction of gentile world power**

#### **Introduction**

The prophet earnestly exhorts all nations to attend to the communication which he has received from Jehovah, as the matter is of the highest importance, and of universal concern, Isaiah 34:1. The wrath of God is denounced against all the nations that had provoked to anger the Defender of the cause of Zion, Isaiah 34:2, Isaiah 34:3. Great crowd of images, by which the final overthrow and utter extermination of every thing that opposes the spread of true religion in the earth are forcibly and majestically set forth; images so very bold and expressive as to render it impossible, without doing great violence to symbolical language, to restrain their import to the calamities which befell the Edomites in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, or in that of any other potentate, or even to the calamities which the enemies of the Church have yet suffered since the delivery of the prophecy. Edom must therefore be a type of Antichrist, the last grand adversary of the people of God; and consequently this most awful prophecy, in its ultimate signification, remains to be accomplished, Isaiah 34:4-15. The Churches of God, at the period of the consummation, commanded to consult the book of Jehovah, and note the exact fulfillment of these terrible predictions in their minutest details. Not one jot or little relative even to the circumstances shadowed forth by the impure animals shall be found to fail; for what the mouth of the Lord has declared necessary to satisfy the Divine justice, his Spirit will accomplish, Isaiah 34:16, Isaiah 34:17.



This and the following chapter make one distinct prophecy; an entire, regular, and beautiful poem, consisting of two parts: the first containing a denunciation of Divine vengeance against the enemies of the people or Church of God; the second describing the flourishing state of the Church of God consequent upon the execution of those judgments. The event foretold is represented as of the highest importance, and of universal concern: All nations are called upon to attend to the declaration of it; and the wrath of God is denounced against all the nations, that is, all those that had provoked to anger the Defender of the cause of Zion. Among those, Edom is particularly specified. The principal provocation of Edom was their insulting the Jews in their distress, and joining against them with their enemies, the Chaldeans; see Amos 1:11; Ezekiel 25:12; Ezekiel 35:15; Psalm 137:7. Accordingly the Edomites were, together with the rest of the neighboring nations, ravaged and laid waste by Nebuchadnezzar; see Jeremiah 25:15-26; Malachi 1:3, Malachi 1:4, and see Marsham, *Can. Chron. Saec. xviii.*, who calls this the age of the destruction of cities. The general devastation spread through all these countries by Nebuchadnezzar may be the event which the prophet has primarily in view in the thirty-fourth chapter: but this event, as far as we have any account of it in history, seems by no means to come up to the terms of the prophecy, or to justify so highly wrought and terrible a description; and it is not easy to discover what connection the extremely flourishing state of the Church or people of God, described in the next chapter, could have with those events, and how the former could be the consequence of the latter, as it is there represented to be. By a figure, very common in the prophetic writings, any city or people, remarkably distinguished as enemies of the people and kingdom of God, is put for those enemies in general. This seems here to be the case with Edom and Botsra. It seems, therefore, reasonable to suppose, with many learned expositors, that this prophecy has a farther view to events still future; to some great revolutions to be effected in later times, antecedent to that more perfect state of the kingdom of God upon earth, and serving to introduce it, which the Holy Scriptures warrant us to expect.

That the thirty-fifth chapter has a view beyond any thing that could be the immediate consequence of those events, is plain from every part, especially from the middle of it, Isaiah 35:5, Isaiah 35:6; where the miraculous works wrought by our blessed Savior are so clearly specified, that we cannot avoid making the application: and our Savior himself has moreover plainly referred to this very passage, as speaking of him and his works, Matthew 11:4, Matthew 11:5. He bids the disciples of John to go and report to their master the things which they heard and saw; that the blind received their sight, the lame walked, and the deaf heard; and leaves it to him to draw the conclusion in answer to his inquiry, whether he who performed the very works which the prophets foretold should be performed by the Messiah, was not indeed the Messiah himself. And

where are these works so distinctly marked by any of the prophets as in this place? and how could they be marked more distinctly? To these the strictly literal interpretation of the prophet's words directs us. According to the allegorical interpretation they may have a farther view: this part of the prophecy may run parallel with the former and relate to the future advent of Christ; to the conversion of the Jews, and their restitution to their land; to the extension and purification of the Christian faith; events predicted in the Holy Scriptures as preparatory to it. Kimchi says, "This chapter points out the future destruction of Rome, which is here called Bosra; for Bosra was a great city of the Edomites. Now the major part of the Romans are Edomites, who profess the law of Jesus. The Emperor Caesar (qy. Constantine) was an Edomite, and so were all the emperors after him. The destruction of the Turkish empire is also comprehended in this prophecy." - L. As to the last, I say, Amen!

## **Verses 1-7. The battle of Armageddon**

### **Verse 1**

**Hearken "Attend unto me"** - A MS. adds in this line the word אלי ali, unto me, after לאמים leummim ; which seems to be genuine.

### **Verse 4**

**And all the host of heaven** See note on Isaiah 24:21, and De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum, Prael. ix.

### **Verse 5**

**For my sword shall be bathed in heaven "For my sword is made bare in the heavens"** - There seems to be some impropriety in this, according to the present reading: "My sword is made drunken, or is bathed in the heavens; "which forestalls, and expresses not in its proper place, what belongs to the next verse: for the sword of Jehovah was not to be bathed or glutted with blood in the heavens, but in Botsra and the land of Edom. In the heavens it was only prepared for slaughter. To remedy this, Archbishop Secker proposes to read, for בשמים bashshamayim, בדמם bedamim ; referring to Jeremiah 46:10. But even this is premature, and not in its proper place. The Chaldee, for רותה rivvethah, has תתגלי tithgalli, shall be revealed or disclosed: perhaps he read תראה teraeh or נראה nirathah . Whatever reading, different I presume from the present, he might find in his copy, I follow the sense which he has given of it.

## Verse 6

**The Lord hath a sacrifice "For Jehovah celebrateth a sacrifice"** - Ezekiel, Ezekiel 39:16, Ezekiel 39:17, has manifestly imitated this place of Isaiah. He hath set forth the great leaders and princes of the adverse powers under the same emblems of goats, bulls, rams, fatlings, etc., and has added to the boldness of the imagery, by introducing God as summoning all the fowls of the air, and all the beasts of the field, and bidding them to the feast which he has prepared for them by the slaughter of the enemies of his people: -

"And thou, son of man,

Thus saith the Lord Jehovah,

Say to the bird of every wing,

And to every beast of the field:

Assemble yourselves, and come;

Gather together from every side,

To the sacrifice which I make for you,

A great slaughter on the mountains of Israel.

And ye shall eat flesh and drink blood:

The flesh of the mighty shall ye eat,

And the blood of the lofty of the earth shall ye drink;

Of rams, of lambs, and of goats,

Of bullocks, all of them the fat ones of Bashan;

And ye shall eat fat, till ye are cloyed,

And drink blood, till ye are drunken;

Of my slaughter, which I have slain for you."

The sublime author of the Revelation 19:17, Revelation 19:18, has taken this image from Ezekiel, rather than from Isaiah.

## Verse 7

**The unicorns shall come down** - ראמים reemim, translated wild goats by Bishop Lowth. The ראם reem Bochart thinks to be a species of wild goat in the deserts of Arabia. It seems generally to mean the rhinoceros.

**With blood "With their blood"** - מדמם middamam ; so two ancient MSS. of Kennicott's the Syriac, and Chaldee.

## 8-15. Desolation following this disaster

### Verse 8

**The year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion "The year of recompense to the defender of the cause of Zion"** - As from דון dun, דין din, a judge; so from רוב rub, ריב rib, an advocate, or defender; Judici Sionis: Syriac.

### Verse 11

**The cormorant** - קאח kaath, the pelican, from the root קיא ki, to vomit, because it is said she swallows shell-fish, and when the heat of her stomach has killed the fish, she vomits the shells, takes out the dead fish, and eats them.

**The bittern** - קפד kippod, the hedge-hog, or porcupine.

**The owl** - ינשופ yanshoph, the bittern, from נשף nashaph, to blow, because of the blowing noise it makes, almost like the lowing of an ox. My old MS. Bible renders the words thus: - The foule in face like an asse, and the yrchoun, and the snyte (snipe.)

**The line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness "The plummet of emptiness over her scorched plains"** - The word חריה choreyha, joined to the 12th verse, embarrasses it, and makes it inexplicable. At least I do not know that any one has yet made out the construction, or given any tolerable explication of it. I join it to the 11th verse, and supply a letter or two, which seem to have been lost. Fifteen MSS. five ancient, and two editions, read חוריה choreyha ; the first printed edition of 1486, I think nearer to the truth, חור חריה chor choreyha . I read בחרריה becharereyha, or על חרריה al chorereyha ; see Jeremiah 17:6. A MS. has חדיה chodiah, and the Syriac reads חדוה chaduah, *gaudium*, joining it to the two preceding words; which he likewise reads differently, but without improving the sense. However, his authority is clear for dividing the verses as they are here divided. I read שם shem, as a noun. They shall boast, יקראו yikreu ; see Proverbs 20:6.

### Verse 13

**And thorns shall come up in her palaces** - בערמנותיה vealu bearmenotheyha ; so read all the ancient versions.

**A court for owls** - יענה yaanah, the ostrich, from ענה anah, to cry, because of the noise it makes. "They roar," says Dr. Shaw, "sometimes like a lion - sometimes like a bull. I have often heard them groan as if in the utmost distress."

### Verse 14

**The wild beasts of the desert** - ציים tsiyim, the mountain cats. - Bochart.

**Wild beasts of the island** - איים aiyim, the jackals.

**The satyr** - שעיר seir, the hairy one, probably the he-goat.

**The screech owl** - לילית lilith, the night-bird, the night-raven, nyctycorax, from ליל layil, or לילה lailah, the night.

### Verse 15

**The great owl** - קפוז kippoz, the ακοντιας, or darter, a serpent so called because of its suddenly leaping up or darting on its prey. Probably the mongoose or ichneumon may be intended.

**The vultures** - דיות daiyoth, the black vultures. My old MS. Bible renders these names curiously: And ageyn cumen schul devylis: the beste, party of an asse, and party of a mam: and the wodwose, the tother schal crien to the tother. There schal byn lamya, that is, thrisse, or a beste, havynge the body liic a woman, and hors feet. Ther hadde dichis, the yrchoun, and nurshide out littil chittis. There ben gadred kiitis, the top to the top. What language!

**Every one with her mate** - A MS. adds אל el after אשה ishshah, which seems necessary to the construction; and so the Syriac and Vulgate. Another MS. adds in the same place את eth, which is equivalent.

**Verses 16-17. Divine guarantee that Israel will possess and inhabit the land**

### Verse 16

**My mouth "For the mouth of Jehovah"** - For הוא hu, five MSS., (three ancient), read יהוה Jehovah, and another is so corrected; so likewise the

Septuagint. Two editions have צִוָּם tsivam ; and so the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Arabic, with the edition of 1486, and a MS. has קִבְצָם kebatsam, with the masculine pronoun instead of the feminine: and so in the next verses it is לָהֶם lahem, instead of לָהֶן lahen, in fourteen MSS., six of them ancient. - L. To see the importance of these various readings, the Hebrew Bible must be consulted.

## **Chapter 35**

### **35. The glory of the kingdom**

#### **Introduction**

Flourishing state of the Church of God consequent to the awful judgments predicted in the preceding chapter. The images employed in the description are so very consolatory and sublime as to oblige us to extend their fulfillment to that period of the Gospel dispensation when Messiah shall take unto himself his great power and reign. The fifth and sixth verses were literally accomplished by our Savior and his apostles: but that the miracles wrought in the first century were not the only import of the language used by the prophet, is sufficiently plain from the context. They, therefore, have a farther application; and are contemporary with, or rather a consequence of, the judgments of God upon the enemies of the Church in the latter days; and so relate to the greater influence and extension of the Christian faith, the conversion of the Jews, their restoration to their own land, and the second advent of Christ. Much of the imagery of this chapter seems to have been borrowed from the exodus from Egypt: but it is greatly enlivened by the life, sentiments, and passions ascribed to inanimate objects; all nature being represented as rejoicing with the people of God in consequence of their deliverance; and administering in such an unusual manner to their relief and comfort, as to induce some commentators to extend the meaning of the prophecy to the blessedness of the saints in heaven, Isaiah 35:1-10.

The various miracles our Lord wrought are the best comment on this chapter, which predicts those wondrous works and the glorious state of the Christian Church. See the parallel texts in the margin.

On this chapter Bishop Lowth has offered some important emendations. I shall introduce his translation, as the best yet given of this singular prophecy: -

1. The desert and the waste shall be glad; And the wilderness shall rejoice, and flourish:

- Like the rose shall it beautifully flourish; And the well-watered plain of Jordan shall also rejoice: The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, The beauty of Carmel and of Sharon; These shall behold the glory of Jehovah, The majesty of our God.
- Strengthen ye the feeble hands, And confirm ye the tottering knees.
- Say ye to the faint-hearted, Be ye strong; Fear ye not; behold your God! Vengeance will come; the retribution of God: He himself will come, and will deliver you.
- Then shall be unclosed the eyes of the blind; And the ears of the deaf shall be opened:
- Then shall the lame bound like the hart, And the tongue of the dumb shall sing; For in the wilderness shall burst forth waters, And torrents in the desert:
- And the glowing sand shall become a pool, And the thirsty soil bubbling springs: And in the haunt of dragons shall spring forth The grass with the reed and the bulrush.
- And a highway shall be there; And it shall be called The way of holiness: No unclean person shall pass through it: But he himself shall be with them, walking in the way, And the foolish shall not err therein:
- No lion shall be there; Nor shall the tyrant of the beasts come up thither: Neither shall he be found there But the redeemed shall walk in it. 10. Yea, the ransomed of Jehovah shall return; They shall come to Sion with triumph; And perpetual gladness shall crown their heads. Joy and gladness shall they obtain; And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

## **Verses 1-2. The restoration of the land and the manifestation of the Lord**

### **Verses 3-7. Retrospect upon the tribulation preceding blessing**

#### **Verse 1**

**Shall be glad** - יֵשׁוּמ yesum ; in one MS. the מ mem seems to have been added; and שׁוּם sum is upon a rasure in another. None of the ancient versions acknowledge it; it seems to have been a mistake, arising from the next word beginning with the same letter. Seventeen MSS. have יֵשׁוּשׁוּם yesusum, both vaus expressed; and five MSS. יֵשׁוּם yesum, without the vaus . Probably the true reading is, "The wilderness and the dry place shall be glad. "Not for them.



## Verse 2

**Rejoice even with joy and singing "The well-watered plain of Jordan shall also rejoice"** - For ורנן veranen, the Septuagint read γαρδην γαδην, τα ερηνα του Ιορδανου, "the deserts of Jordan." Four MSS. read גלח gulath ; see Joshua 15:19; : "Irrigua Jordani;" Houbigant. גידה gidoth, *Ripae Jordani*, "the banks of Jordan;" Kennicott. See De S. Poesi Hebr. Praelect. 20 note.

**Unto it** - For לה lah, to it, nine MSS. of Kennicott's and four of De Rossi's read לך lecha, to thee. See ibid.

## Verse 7

**The parched ground "The glowing sand"** - שרב sharab ; this word is Arabic, as well as Hebrew, expressing in both languages the same thing, the glowing sandy plain, which in the hot countries at a distance has the appearance of water. It occurs in the Koran, chap. 24: "But as to the unbelievers, their works are like a vapor in a plain, which the thirsty traveler thinketh to be water, until, when he cometh thereto, he findeth it to be nothing." Mr. Sale's note on this place is, "The Arabic word serab signifies that false appearance which in the eastern countries is often seen on sandy plains about noon, resembling a large lake of water in motion, and is occasioned by the reverberation of the sun beams: 'by the quivering undulating motion of that quick succession of vapours and exhalations which are extracted by the powerful influence of the sun.' - Shaw, Trav. p. 378. It sometimes tempts thirsty travelers out of their way; but deceives them when they come near, either going forward, (for it always appears at the Same distance), or quite vanishing." Q. Curtius has mentioned it: "*Arenas vapor aestivi solis accendit; camporumque non alia, quam vasti et profundi aequoris species est.*" - Lib. vii., c. 5. Dr. Hyde gives us the precise meaning and derivation of the word. "*Dictum nomen Barca הברקה habberakah, splendorem, seu splendentem regionem notat; cum ea regio radiis solaribus tam copiose collustretur, ut reflexum ab arenis lumen adeo intense fulgens, a longinquo spectantibus, ad instar corporis solaris, aquarum speciem referat; et hinc arenarum splendor et radiatio, (et lingua Persica petito nomine), dicitur serab, i.e., aquae superficies seu superficialis aquarum species.*" Annot. in Peritsol., cap. ii.

**"Shall spring forth"** - The ה he in רבצה rebitseh seems to have been at first מ mem in MS. Bodl., whence Dr. Kennicott concludes it should be רבצים rebitsim . But instead of this word the Syriac, Vulgate, and Chaldee read some word signifying to grow, spring up, or abound. Perhaps צהפר paretsah, or פרצו paretsu, or פרץ החציר parats hachatsir, as Houbigant reads. - L.

## Verses 8-10. Return of the redeemed remnant to Zion

### Verse 8

**And a highway** – The word ודֶרֶךְ *vederech* is by mistake added to the first member of the sentence from the beginning of the following member. Sixteen MSS. Of Dr. Kennicott's, seven ancient, and two of De Rossi's have it but once; so likewise the Syriac, Septuagint, and Arabic.

**Err therein** – A MS. Of Dr. Kennicott's adds בּוּ *bo*, in it, which seems necessary to the sense, and so the Vulgate, *per eam*, "by it." One of De Rossi's has שָׁם *sham*, there.

**But it shall be for those "But he himself shall be with them, walking in the way"** – That is, God; see Isaiah 35:4. "Who shall dwell among them, and set them an example that they should follow his steps." Our old English Version translated the place to this purpose, our last translators were misled by the authority of the Jews, who have absurdly made a division of the verses in the midst of the sentence, thereby destroying the construction and the sense.

### Verse 9

**It shall not be found there "Neither shall he be found there"** – Three MSS. Read וְלֹא *velo*, adding the conjunction; and so likewise the Septuagint and Vulgate. And four MSS., one ancient, read יִמָּצֵא *yimmatsa*, the verb, as it certainly ought to be, in the masculine form.

**The redeemed shall walk there** – גְּאוּלִּים *geulim*. Those whose forfeited inheritances are brought back by the kinsman, גּוֹאֵל *goel*, the nearest of kin to the family. This has been considered by all orthodox divines as referring to the incarnation of our Lord, and his sacrificial offering. After גְּאוּלִּים *geulim*, one of De Rossi's MSS. Adds עַד עוֹלָם *ad olam*, for ever, "The redeemed shall walk there for ever."

### Verse 10

**The ransomed** – פְּדוּיִי *peduyey*, from פָּדָה *padah*, "to redeem by paying a price." Those for whom a price was paid down to redeem them from bondage and death.

**Sighing shall flee away** – אָנָּחָה *anachah*. Never was a sorrowful accent better expressed than in this strong guttural word, an-ach-ah; nearly the same with the

Irish in their funeral wailings, och-och-on. The whole nation express all their mournful accents by these three monosyllables.

This chapter contains the following parts: -

1. We have here blessed promises of the latter-day glory.
  - The prophet may be considered as addressing the teachers of the Gospel, to show them that it was their business to encourage and direct the people in their expectation of redemption.
  - A promise of the manifestation of God among men is given.
  - The miracles which Christ should work are explicitly mentioned.
  - The privileges of Christianity are specified; there shall be, 1. Thorough teaching;
2. Holy walking.
  1. Perfect safety.
  2. Complete happiness. And –
  - Final glory. The chapter shows also that no impurity should be tolerated in the Church of God; for as that is the mystical body of Christ, it should be like himself, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

## **Volume VI. Historical parenthesis, 36:1-39:8**

### **Chapter 36**

#### **36-37. Overthrow of the Assyrian army**

Chapters 36-39 form a historical parenthesis concerning the first part of the book (ch.1-35), consisting of predictions of judgment and blessings springing out of the Assyrian period, with the second part of the book, composed of prophecies of comfort emanating from the Babylonian period. Hezekiah's name is mentioned some 35 times in this section, and it is sometimes called the Volume of Hezekiah. This second section is almost identical to the text of 1 Kings 18:13-20:19. It is likely that Isaiah wrote the material that was later incorporated into the court history of Judah and ultimately into the Book of the Kings. (Rev. Ph.L. De Coster, B.Th., D.D.)

## Introduction

Sennacherib, king of Assyria, comes against Judah, and takes all the fenced cities, Isaiah 36:1. He afterwards sends a great host against Jerusalem; and his general Rabshakeh delivers an insulting and blasphemous message to Hezekiah, vv. 2-20. Hezekiah and his people are greatly afflicted at the words of Rabshakeh, Isaiah 36:21, Isaiah 36:22.

The history of the invasion of Sennacherib, and of the miraculous destruction of his army Which makes the subject of so many of Isaiah's prophecies, is very properly inserted here as affording the best light to many parts of those prophecies, and as almost necessary to introduce the prophecy in the thirty-seventh chapter, being the answer of God to Hezekiah's prayer, which could not be properly understood without it. We find the same narrative in the Second Book of Kings, chaps. 18, 19, 20.; and these chapters of Isaiah, 36, 37, 38, Isaiah 39:1-8, for much the greater part, (the account of the sickness of Hezekiah only excepted), are but a different copy of that narration. The difference of the two copies is little more than what has manifestly arisen from the mistakes of transcribers; they mutually correct each other, and most of the mistakes may be perfectly rectified by a collation of the two copies with the assistance of the ancient versions. Some few sentences, or members of sentences, are omitted in this copy of Isaiah, which are found in the other copy in the Book of Kings. Whether these omissions were made by design or mistake may be doubted.

### 36:1-22. The Assyrian blatantly challenges the Lord

#### Verse 3

**Then came forth unto him** - Before these words the other copy, 2 Kings 18:18, adds, ויקראו אל המלך vaiyikreu el hammelech, "And they demanded audience of the king."

#### Verse 5

**I say "Thou hast said"** - Fourteen MSS. (three ancient) of Kennicott's and De Rossi's have it in the second person, אמרת amarta ; and so the other copy, 2 Kings 18:20.

**But they are but vain words** - דבר שפתיים debar sephathayim, a word of the lips. Thou dost talk about counsels, but thou hast none; about strength, but there is none with thee.

## Verse 6

**The staff of this broken reed** - A weakened, faithless ally.

**On Egypt** - The Bodl. MS. adds מֶלֶךְ melech, the king of Egypt; and so perhaps the Chaldee might read.

**It will go into his hand, and pierce it** - Will take subsidy after subsidy, and do nothing for it.

## Verse 7

**But if thou say "But if ye say"** - Two ancient MSS. have תֹּמְרוּ tomeru in the plural number; so likewise the Septuagint, Chaldee, and the other copy, 2 Kings 18:22.

**Ye shall worship before this altar "To worship only before this altar"** - See 2 Chronicles 32:12.

## Verse 10

**Am I now come up without the Lord** - Probably some apostate Israelitish priest might have encouraged the king of Assyria by telling him that Jehovah had given him a commission against Jerusalem.

## Verse 12

**That they may eat their own dung "Destined to eat their own dung"** - לֹאכְלֵם leechol, that they may eat, as our translation literally renders it. But the Syriac reads מֵאֹכְלֵם meechol, that they may not eat, perhaps rightly, and afterward וּמִשְׁתִּתּוֹת umishshethoth, or וּשְׁתִּתּוֹת ushethoth, to the same purpose. Seventeen of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., ten of De Rossi's and two of my own, read מֵימֵי meymey, the water; mine have מֵימֵי שְׁנֵיהֶם meymey sheneyhem, and write in the margin רִגְלֵיהֶם regleyhem, the water of their feet, a modest way of expressing urine.

## Verse 15

**This city shall not be delivered** - וְלֹא velo, And this city. Ten of Kennicott's MSS., and nine of De Rossi's, with one (ancient) of my own, add the conjunction.

## Verse 16

**Make an agreement** - בִּרְכָה berachah, make a blessing with me; i.e., Give me a ransom for the city, and I will not destroy it; give me the yearly tribute thou hast promised.

## Verse 17

**And vineyards** - The other copy, 2 Kings 18:32, adds here: "A land of oil-olive, and of honey; that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah when he seduceth you."

## Verse 19

**Where are the gods** - Many MSS. add the conjunction here also: And, or But, where are the gods, etc.

For other matters relative to this chapter, see the notes on 2 Kings 18:13; (note), etc.

**Of Sepharvaim** - The other copy, 2 Kings 18:34, adds, of "Henah and Ivah."

**Have they delivered** - וְכִי vechi . The copulative is not expressed here by the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and three MSS.; nor is it in any other copy. Ib. Houbigant reads הֲכִי hachi, with the interrogative particle; a probable conjecture, which the ancient Versions above quoted seem to favor.

## Verse 21

**But they held their peace** "**But the people held their peace**" - The word הָעָם haam, the people, is supplied from the other copy, and is authorized by a MS. which inserts it after אָתָּה otho .

## Chapter 37

### Introduction

Hezekiah is greatly distressed, and sends to Isaiah the prophet to pray for him, Isaiah 37:1-4. Isaiah returns a comfortable answer, and predicts the destruction of the king of Assyria and his army, Isaiah 37:5-7. Sennacherib, hearing that his kingdom was invaded by the Ethiopians, sends a terrible letter to Hezekiah, to induce him to surrender, Isaiah 37:9-13. Hezekiah goes to the temple, spreads the letter before the Lord, and makes a most affecting prayer, Isaiah 37:14-20.

Isaiah is sent to him to assure him that his prayer is heard; that Jerusalem shall be delivered; and that the Assyrians shall be destroyed, Isaiah 37:21-35. That very night a messenger of God slays one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians, Isaiah 37:36. Sennacherib returns to Nineveh, and is slain by his own sons, Isaiah 37:37, Isaiah 37:38.

### **37:1-38. The Lord's reply to the challenge**

#### **Verse 6**

**Thus shall ye say** - כה תאמרון ko tomerun, "thus shall ye (explicitly, earnestly, and positively) say. "The paragogic nun deepens and increases the sense.

#### **Verse 7**

**I will send a blast "I will infuse a spirit into him"** - "נותין בו רוח" nothen bo roach never signifies any thing but putting a spirit into a person: this was πνευμα δειλιας, the spirit of deceit." - Secker. "I will send a blast" - I do not think that Archbishop Secker has hit the true meaning of these words. I believe רוח ruach means here a pestilential wind, such as the Arabs call simoom, that instantly suffocates both man and beast; and is what is termed "the angel of the Lord," God's messenger of death to the Assyrians, Isaiah 37:36.

#### **Verse 8**

**Rabshakeh returned** - From Isaiah 36:2, we learn that the king of Assyria had sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem; now it is likely that Rabshakeh had besieged that place, and that the king of Assyria had taken his station before this city, and dispatched Rabshakeh against Jerusalem. But, as in the verse above it is said, "he had departed from Lachish," probably he had been obliged to raise the siege, and sat down before Libnah, which promised an easier conquest.

#### **Verse 9**

**He heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia** - When he heard that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia had come out against him, then he sent that blasphemous manifesto which is contained in Isaiah 37:10-13, to terrify Hezekiah into submission. How much was this like, in words and spirit, to the manifesto sent to the Parisians by the late Duke of Brunswick, from the plains of Champagne, in 1792, which was the forerunner of the mighty torrents of human blood which was shed in the French revolution! And what a blast of God fell upon him and his army - nearly like that which fell on the army of Sennacherib!



**He sent messengers "He sent messengers again"** - The word וישמע vaiyishma, "and he heard, "which occurs the second time in this verse, is repeated by mistake from the beginning of the verse. It is omitted in an ancient MS. It is a mere tautology, and embarrasses the sense. The true reading instead of it is, וישב veyesheb, "and he returned, "which the Septuagint read in this place, απεστρεψε, and which is preserved in the other copy, 2 Kings 19:9; : "He returned and sent, "that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, "he sent again."

## Verse 12

**As Gozan, and Haran** - חרן Charan : but הרן Haran is the reading of four of Kennicott's MSS. and one of De Rossi's.

## Verse 14

**And read it "And read them"** - ויקראם vayikraem . So MS. Bodl. in this place; and so the other copy; instead of ויקראהו vayikraehu, "and read It."

**And spread it "And spread them"** - ויפרשהו vaiyiphreahu . hu is upon a rasure in a MS., which probably was at first מ mem . The same mistake as in the foregoing note.

## Verse 15

**Unto the Lord "Before Jehovah"** - That is, in the sanctuary. For אל el, the Syriac, Chaldee, and the other copy, 2 Kings 19:15, read לפני liphney, "before the face."

## Verse 18

**The nations** - הארצות haratsoth, "the lands; "instead of this word, which destroys the sense, ten of Kennicott's and five of De Rossi's MSS. (one ancient) have here גוים goyim, "nations;" which is undoubtedly the true reading, being preserved also in the other copy; 2 Kings 19:17. Another MS. suggests another method of rectifying the sense in this place, by reading מלכם malcam, "their king, "instead of ארצם artsam, "their land;" but it ought to be מלכיהם malcheyhem, "all the countries and their kings."

## Verse 20

**Save us "Save us, we beseech thee"** - The supplicating particle, נא na, is supplied here from eighteen MSS., three ancient, of Dr. Kennicott, and ten of De Rossi, and from the other copy; 2 Kings 19:19.

**That thou art the Lord, even thou only "That thou Jehovah art the only God"** - The word אֱלֹהִים Elohim, "God," is lost here in the Hebrew text, but preserved in the other copy; 2 Kings 19:19. The Syriac and Septuagint seem here to have had in their copies אֱלֹהִים Elohim, instead of יְהוָה Yehovah .

### Verse 21

**Then Isaiah - sent unto Hezekiah** - The Syriac and Septuagint understand and render the verb passively, was sent.

**Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib "Thy prayer unto me concerning Sennacherib - I have heard"** - שמעתי shamati ; this word, necessary to the sense, is lost in this place out of the Hebrew text. One MS. of Dr. Kennicott's and one of De Rossi's have it written above the line in a later hand. The Septuagint and Syriac found it in their copies; and it is preserved in the other copy; 2 Kings 19:20.

### Verse 23

**Against the Holy One of Israel** - For אֵל el, to, the other copy has עַל al, against, rather more properly.

### Verse 24

**By thy servants "By thy messengers"** - The text has עַבְדֶּיךָ abdeycha, thy servants; but the true reading seems to be מַלְאֲכֶיךָ malacheycha, thy messengers, as in the other copy, 2 Kings 19:23; and as the Septuagint and Syriac found it in their copies in this place.

**Reproached the Lord** - אֲדֹנָי Adonai : but one of my MSS. has יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי Yehovah Adonai, Jehovah the Lord. This reading is not found, I think, in any other MS., but several have יְהוָה Yehovah for אֲדֹנָי Adonai .

**I will enter into the height of his border "I will penetrate into his extreme retreats"** - The text has מְרוֹם marom, the height which seems to have been taken by mistake from the line but one above. Two MSS. have here מְלוֹן malon, the lodge or retreat; which is the word in the other copy, 2 Kings 19:23, and I think is the true reading.

**The forest of has Carmel** - The forest and his fruitful field; that is, I will possess myself of the whole country.

## Verse 25

**Water "Strange waters"** - The word זרים *zarim*, strange, lost out of the Hebrew text in this place, is supplied from the other copy. A MS. supplies the word רבים *rabbim*, many, instead of it.

**With the sole of my feet** - With my infantry.

**All the rivers of the besieged places "All the canals of fenced places"** - The principal cities of Egypt, the scene of his late exploits, were chiefly defended by deep moats, canals, or large lakes, made by labor and art, with which they were surrounded. See Harmer's *Observ.* 2 p. 304. Claudian introduces Alaric boasting of his conquests in the same extravagant manner: -

*"Subsidere nostris*

*Sub pedibus montes; arescere vidimus amnes. -*

*Fregi Alpes, galeisque Padum victricibus hausi."*

*De Bello Getic.* 526.

"The mountains have passed away under our feet; we have seen the rivers dried up. I have broken the Alps, and laden out the Po with our victorious helmets."

## Verse 26

**Lay waste defended cities into ruinous heaps "Lay waste warlike nations; strong fenced cities"** - גלים נצים *gallim nitstsim*. It is not easy to give a satisfactory account of these two words, which have greatly embarrassed all the interpreters, ancient and modern. For גלים *gallim* I read גוים *goyim*, as the Septuagint do in this place, εθνη. The word נצים *netsim* the Vulgate renders in this place *compugnantium*; in the parallel place, 2 Kings 19:25, *pugnantium*; and the Septuagint μαχμωον, fighting, warlike. This rendering is as well authorized as any other that I know of; and, with the reading of the Septuagint, perfectly clears up the construction. See the margin on all the preceding verses.

## Verse 27

**Corn blasted** - שדמה *shedemah*, parched: it does not appear that there is any good authority for this word. The true reading seems to be שדפה *shedephah*, blasted, as it is in six MSS. (two ancient) here, and in the other copy.

## Verse 29

**Will I put my hook in thy nose** - *Et fraenum meum: Jonathan vocem מֶתֶג metheg, interpretatus est זֶמָם zemam, i.e., annulum, sive uncum, eumque ferreum, quem infigunt naribus camelaе: eoque trahitur, quoniam illa feris motibus agitur: et hoc est, quod discimus in Talmude; et camela cum annulo narium: scilicet, egreditur die sabbathi.* "And my bridle: Jonathan interprets the word metheg by zemam, a ring, or that iron hook which they put in the nostrils of a camel to lead her about, check her in her restiveness, etc. And this is what we mean in the Talmud, when we say, And the camel with the ring of her nostrils shall go out on the Sabbath day." - Jarchi in 2 Kings 19:28. *Ponam circulum in naribus tuis.* "I will put a ring in thy nostrils." - Jerome. Just as at this day they put a ring into the nose of the bear, the buffalo, and other wild beasts, to lead them, and to govern them when they are unruly. Bulls are often ringed thus in several parts of England. The Hindoos compare a person who is the slave of his wife to a cow led by the ring in her nose.

## Verse 36

**Then the angel** - Before "the angel, "the other copy, 2 Kings 19:35, adds "it came to pass the same night, that " - The Prophet Hosea, Hosea 1:7, has given a plain prediction of the miraculous deliverance of the kingdom of Judah: -

"And to the house of Judah I will be tenderly merciful:

And I will save them by Jehovah their God.

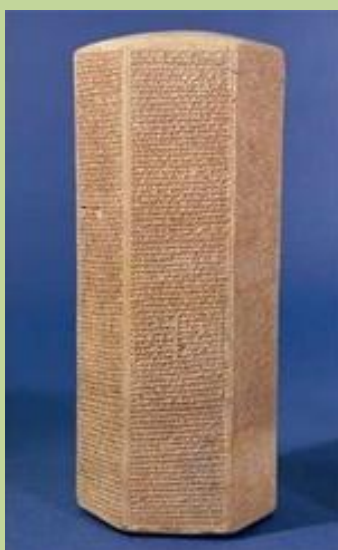
And I will not save them by the bow;

Nor by sword, nor by battle;

By horses, nor by horsemen."

## Verse 38

**His sons smote him** - What an awful punishment of his blasphemy! Who can harden his neck against God, and be successful? God does not lightly pass by blasphemy against himself, his government, his word, his Son, or his people. Let the profligate take care!



## Archaeological light

**Sennacherib's own account of the siege of Jerusalem is inscribed on this prism as follows:**

"I had completed the palace in the midst of the city of Nineveh for my royal residence." "I shut King Hezekiah up like a bird inside Jerusalem."

"Hezekiah, the Judahite"

This siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib is documented in three books of the Bible. 2nd Kings, 2nd Chronicles and Isaiah. "Now it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them." – Isaiah 36

Sennacherib's prism also contains the name of Merodach Baladan found in the book of Isaiah.

"In my first campaign I accomplished the defeat of Merodach-Baladan"

"At that time Merodach Baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon." - Isaiah 39

The prism gives a detailed account of Sennacherib's war campaigns and he consistently brags about the many people he has killed and what nations he destroyed and forced to pay tribute to him. He describes hanging people on stakes as well as amputating hands and genitalia of his enemies. The Bible states that God sent angels to destroy his entire army for his arrogant threats against Hezekiah and Israel. "Hear all the words

<sup>1</sup>Sennacherib, the great king,  
<sup>2</sup>the mighty king,  
king of the world,  
king of Assyria,  
<sup>3</sup>king of the four quarters,  
the wise shepherd,  
<sup>4</sup>favorite of the great gods,  
guardian of right,  
<sup>5</sup>lover of justice,  
who lends support,  
<sup>6</sup>who comes to the aid of the  
destitute,  
who performs pious acts,  
<sup>7</sup>perfect hero,  
mighty man,  
<sup>8</sup>first among all princes,  
the powerful one who  
consumes <sup>9</sup>the insubmissive,  
who strikes the wicked with  
the thunderbolt.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See full detail: <http://www.kchanson.com/ANCDOCS/meso/sennprism1.html>

## Chapter 38

### 38-39. Hezekiah's sickness and sin

#### Introduction

Account of Hezekiah's dangerous sickness and miraculous recovery, Isaiah 38:1-9. Tender and beautiful song of thanksgiving, in which this pious king breathed out the sentiments of a grateful heart, when his life was, as it were, restored. This ode may be adapted to other cases; and will always afford profit and pleasure to those who are not void of feeling and piety, Isaiah 38:10-22.

#### Verse 1

**In those days** - The reader is requested to consult the notes on 2 Kings 20 in reference to the principal parts of this chapter.

#### Verse 2

**Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall** - The furniture of an eastern divan or chamber, either for the reception of company or for private use, consists chiefly of carpets spread on the floor in the middle; and of sofas, or couches ranged on one or more sides of the room, on a part raised somewhat above the floor. On these they repose themselves in the day, and sleep at night. It is to be observed that the corner of the room is the place of honor. Dr. Pococke, when he was introduced to the Sheikh of Furshout, found him sitting in the corner of his room. He describes another Arab Sheikh "as sitting in the corner of a large green tent, pitched in the middle of an encampment of Arabs; and the Bey of Girge as placed on a sofa in a corner to the right as one entered the room." - Harmer's Observ. 2 p. 60. Lady Mary Montague, giving an account of a visit which she made to the Kahya's lady at Adrianople, says, "She ordered cushions to be given me; and took care to place me in the corner, which is the place of honor." - Letter 33. The reason of this seems to be, that the person so placed is distinguished, and in a manner separated, from the rest of the company, and as it were guarded by the wall on each side. We are to suppose Hezekiah's couch placed in the same situation; in which turning on either side, he must turn his face to the wall; by which he would withdraw himself from those who were attending upon him in his apartment, in order to address his private prayer to God.

**Isaiah 38:3** And he said, I beseech thee, O Jehovah, remember now how I have endeavored to walk before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart; and have done that which is good in thine eyes. And Hezekiah wept, and lamented grievously. - L.

**Isaiah 38:4** Now [before Isaiah was gone out into the middle court] the word of Jehovah came unto him, saying, Go [back], and say unto Hezekiah, Thus saith Jehovah the God of David thy father, I have heard thy supplication; I have seen thy tears. Behold [I will heal thee; and on the third day thou shalt go up into the house of Jehovah.

**Isaiah 38:5** And] I will add unto thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver thee, and this city, from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will protect this city. And [Hezekiah said, By what sign shall I know that I shall go up into the house of Jehovah?

**Isaiah 38:7** And Isaiah said], This shall be the sign unto thee from Jehovah, that Jehovah still bring to effect this word which he hath spoken.

The words in the translation included within crotchets are supplied from the parallel place, 2 Kings 20:4, 2 Kings 20:5, to make the narration more perfect. I have also taken the liberty, with Houbigant, of bringing forward the two last verses of this chapter, and inserting them in their proper places of the narration with the same mark. Kimchi's note on these two verses is as follows: "This and the following verse belong not to the writing of Hezekiah; and I see no reason why they are written here after the writing; for their right place is above, after And I will protect this city, Isaiah 38:6. And so they stand in the book of Kings, " 2 Kings 20:7, 2 Kings 20:8. The narration of this chapter seems to be in some parts an abridgment of that of 2 Kings 20. The abridger, having finished his extract here with the eleventh verse, seems to have observed, that the seventh and eighth verses of 2 Kings 20 were wanted to complete the narration: he therefore added them at the end of the chapter, after he had inserted the song of Hezekiah, probably with marks for their insertion in their proper places; which marks were afterwards neglected by transcribers. Or a transcriber might omit them by mistake, and add them at the end of the chapter with such marks. Many transpositions are, with great probability, to be accounted for in the same way.

## **Verse 6**

**I will defend this city** - The other copy, 2 Kings 20:6, adds:" for mine own sake, and for the sake of David my servant;" and the sentence seems somewhat abrupt without it.



## Verse 8

**Which is gone down "By which the sun is gone down"** - For בשמש bashshemesh, the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee read השמש , hashshemesh . - Houbigant. In the history of this miracle in the book of Kings, ( 2 Kings 20:9-11;), there is no mention at all made of the sun, but only of the going backward of the shadow: which might be effected by a supernatural refraction. The first ὁ ἥλιος, the sun, in this verse is omitted in the Septuagint, MS. Pachom.

## Verse 9

**The writing of Hezekiah** - Here the book of Kings deserts us, the song of Hezekiah not being inserted in it. Another copy of this very obscure passage (obscure not only from the concise poetical style, but because it is probably very incorrect) would have been of great service.

The MSS. and ancient Versions, especially the latter, will help us to get through some of the many difficulties which we meet with in it.

## Verse 11

**The Lord "Jehovah"** - יה Yah, יה Yah, seems to be יהוה Yehovah, in MS. Bodl., and it was so at first written in another. So the Syriac. See Houbigant. I believe יהוה Yehovah was the original reading. See the note on Isaiah 12:2; (note).

## Verse 12

**Mine age - is removed from me as a shepherd's tent** - רעי roi is put for רעה roeh, say the rabbis (Sal. Den Melec on the place); but much more probably is written imperfectly for רעים roim, shepherds. See note on Isaiah 5:1.

I shall be removed from this state to another, as a shepherd removes his tent from one place to another for the sake of his flock. Is not this a strong intimation of his belief in a future state?

**I have cut off like a weaver my life "My life is cut off as by the weaver"** - קפדתי kippadti . This verb is rendered passively, and in the third person, by the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

## Verse 13

The last line of the foregoing verse מיום עד לילה תשלימי miyom ad layelah tashlimeni, "In the course of the day thou wilt finish my web; "or, as the

common version has it, "From day even to night wilt thou make an end of me, "is not repeated at the end of this verse in the Syriac version; and a MS. omits it. It seems to have been inserted a second time in the Hebrew text by mistake.

**I reckoned till morning, etc. "I roared until the morning like the lion"** - For שׂוֹיִתִּי shivvithi, the Chaldee has נִהַמֵּית nihameith : he read שֹׁאגְתִּי shaagti, the proper term for the roaring of a lion; often applied to the deep groaning of men in sickness. See Psalm 22, Psalm 32:3; Psalm 38:9; Job 3:24. The Masoretes divide the sentence, as I have done; taking כְּאֵרִי caari, like a lion, into the first member; and so likewise the Septuagint.

#### Verse 14

**Like - a swallow "Like the swallow"** - כְּסִיס kesis ; so read two MSS., Theodot., and Hieron.

**Mine eyes fail** - For דָּלוּ dallu the Septuagint read καλου, ἐξελιπον . Compare Psalm 69:4; Psalm 119:82, Psalm 119:123; Lamentations 2:11; Lamentations 4:17, in the Hebrew and in the Septuagint.

**O Lord "O Lord"** - For יְהוָה Jehovah, thirty MSS. and eight editions read אֲדֹנָי Adonai .

**Undertake for me "Contend for me"** - עֲשֶׂקָה ashekah, with שׁ shin, Jarchi: this sense of the word is established by Genesis 26:20; : "He called the name of the well עֵשֶׂק esek, because they strove with him:" הִתְעַשְׂקוּ hithasseku, equivalent to יָרִיבוּ yaribu, at the beginning of the verse.

#### Verse 15

**I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul "Through the rest of my years will I reflect on this bitterness of my soul"** - אֲדַדְדֵּה eddaddeh ; *recogitabo*, Vulg., *reputabo*, Hieron. in loc.

#### Verse 16

**By these things men live "For this cause shall it be declared"** - Περι αυτης γαρ ανηγγελη σοι, και εξηγειρας μου την πνοην, Sept. They read in their copies not very different from the present text, from which all the ancient Versions vary. They entirely omit two words, כָּלֹל ulecol bahen ; as to which there is some variation in the MSS. One MS. has וּבְכָל ubechol, and in all; two others וְכָל vechol, and all, and ten MSS. have בָּהֶם bahem, in them, in the masculine gender.

Taking this as in the common Version, we may observe, it is not an unfrequent case, that afflictions, and especially such as tend to a speedy death, become the means, not only of saving the soul, but also of lengthening the life.

**Make me to live "Hast prolonged my life"** - A MSS. and the Babylonish Talmud read חִינִיּוֹת *vetachayeni*, and so the ancient Versions. It must necessarily be in the second person.

### Verse 17

**For peace I had great bitterness "My anguish is changed into ease"** - לִי מַר *mar li mar*, "*mutata mthi est amaritudo*." Paronomasia; a figure which the prophet frequently admits. I do not always note it, because it cannot ever be preserved in the translation, and the sense seldom depends upon it. But here it perfectly clears up the great obscurity of the passage. See Lowth on the place.

**Thou hast rescued** - כַּחַשׁ chashachta, with כ caph, instead of ק koph ; so the Septuagint and Vulgate; Houbigant. See Chappelow on Job 33:18.

**From perdition** - מִשְׁחַת בְּלִי *mishshachath beli*, ἵνα μὴ ἀποληται, Sept. *ut non periret*, "that it may not perish." Vulg. Perhaps inverting the order of the words. See Houbigant.

**Thou hast in love to my soul** - חַשַׁקְתָּ *chashakta*, "thou hast lovingly embraced" or kissed "my soul out of the pit of corruption."

### Verse 19

**Thy truth** - אֵל אִמִּיטְכָּה *el amittecha* . A MS. omits אֵל *el* ; and instead of אֵל *el*, an ancient MS. and one edition read אֶת *eth* . The same mistake as in Psalm 2:7.

### Verse 21

**Let them take a lump of figs, etc.** - God, in effecting this miraculous cure, was pleased to order the use of means not improper for that end.

*"Folia, et, quae non maturuere, fici, strumis illinuntur omnibusque quae emollienda sunt discutiendave."* - Plin. Nat. Hist. 23:7.

*"Ad discutienda ea, quae in corporis parte aliqua coierunt, maxime possunt-ficus arida,"* etc. - Celsus, 5:11.

See the note on 2 Kings 20:7; (note). Philemon Holland translates the passage as a medical man: "The milke or white juice that the figge tree yeldeth is of the same nature that vinegre: and therefore it will cruddle milke as well as rennet, or rendles. The right season of gathering this milkie substance is before that the figs be ripe upon the tree; and then it must be dried in the shadow: thus prepared, it is good to break impostumes, and keepe ulcer open."

## Chapter 39

### Introduction

The Babylonish monarch sends letters of congratulation and a present to Hezekiah, on account of his recovery from his late dangerous illness, Isaiah 39:1. The king of Judah shows the messengers of Merodach-baladan all the treasures of his house and kingdom, Isaiah 39:2. The prophet takes occasion from this ostentatious display of the king to predict the captivity of the royal family, and of the people, by the Babylonians, Isaiah 39:3-8.

Hitherto the copy of this history in the second book of Kings has been much the most correct; in this chapter that in Isaiah has the advantage. In the two first verses two mistakes in the other copy are to be corrected from this: for הזקיהו hizkiyahu, read ויחזק vayechezek, and was recovered; and for וישמע vaiyishma, he heard, read וישמח vaiyismach, he rejoiced.

### 39:1-8. Hezekiah's foolish pride

#### Verse 1

**At that time Merodach-baladan** - This name is variously written in the MSS. Berodach, Medorach, Medarech, and Medurach.

**"And ambassadors"** - The Septuagint add here και πρεσβεις ; that is, ומלאכים umalachim . and ambassadors; which word seems to be necessary to the sense, though omitted in the Hebrew text both here and in the other copy, 2 Kings 20:12. For the subsequent narration refers to them all along, "these men, whence came they?" etc.; plainly supposing them to have been personally mentioned before. See Houbigant.

#### Verse 6

**To Babylon** - בבֶּלָה babelah, so two MSS., (one ancient); rightly, without doubt as the other copy ( 2 Kings 20:17;) has it. This prediction was fulfilled about one

hundred and fifty years after it was spoken: see Daniel 1:2, Daniel 1:3-7. What a proof of Divine omniscience!

## Verse 8

**Then said Hezekiah** - The nature of Hezekiah's crime, and his humiliation on the message of God to him by the prophet, is more expressly declared by the author of the book of the Chronicles: "But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up; therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding, Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. Howbeit, in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart." 2 Chronicles 32:25, 2 Chronicles 32:26, 2 Chronicles 32:30, 2 Chronicles 32:31.

**There shall be peace and truth in my days** - I rather think these words should be understood as an humble inquiry of the king, addressed to the prophet. "Shall there be prosperity, שְׁלוֹם shalom, and truth in My days? - Shall I escape the evil which thou predictest?" Understood otherwise, they manifest a pitiful unconcern both for his own family and for the nation. "So I be well, I care not how it may go with others." This is the view I have taken of the passage in 2 Kings 21:19. Let the reader judge whether this, or the former, should be preferred. See the concluding notes on 2 Kings 20.

### Historical Note

Merodach-Baladan was twice ruler of Babylon (722-710 and 703-701 B.C.). He initiated the policy of strengthening Chaldea and set the stage for the rise of Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar II, and Judah's subsequent captivity.

**MERODACH-BALADAN** (Heb. מֶרֶדַּח בַּלְאֲדָן; Akk. <sup>d</sup>Marduk-ap-la-iddin; "Marduk has given a son"), Babylonian king (722–710 B.C.E.). Assyrian inscriptions place the origin of Merodach-Baladan in the land of Bît-Iakin, a Chaldean kingdom near the coast of the Persian Gulf ("Sealands"). This is more probable than Merodach-Baladan's claim that he was the son and legal heir of the Babylonian king Erība-Marduk. In 731 B.C.E., Ukin-zer of Bît Amukkani, a Chaldean, wrested the kingship of Babylonia from the pro-Assyrian king Nabunadin-zer. Merodach-Baladan, who also had designs on the kingship, supported the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III, against Ukin-zer. He was thus able to strengthen his position among the Chaldean tribes, increase his influence

in Babylonia, and forge an alliance with Elam, without interference from Tiglath-Pileser III or Shalmaneser V, both of whom exercised sovereignty over Babylonia (729–722 B.C.E.).

With the death of Shalmaneser V, Merodach-Baladan seized the Babylonian throne (722/721 B.C.E.). This marked the beginning of violent struggles between Merodach-Baladan and the Assyrians. By 720, Sargon II was preparing for war against Merodach-Baladan, who had the support of the Elamites. Conflicting reports have been preserved of this battle, which took place in the plain of Dêr, east of the Tigris. Merodach-Baladan ruled Babylonia until 710, when, through neglect and economic exploitation, he incurred the enmity of the native Babylonian population in the large urban centers which had been loyal to him, although he enjoyed the support of the Chaldean and Babylonian tribes which were largely concentrated in the southern part of the country.

Therefore, it is not surprising that when Sargon II waged war against Merodach-Baladan in 710, he was warmly received by the urban population. Sargon defeated Merodach-Baladan's armies and conquered his fortresses, causing Merodach-Baladan to flee south to Bît-Iakin, where he waited for an opportunity to regain the throne. Seeing in the widespread disturbances that arose after the death of Sargon (705) the opportunity to resume his rule over Babylonia, Merodach-Baladan, in 703, with the support of the Elamites and much of the Babylonian population, reestablished his rule there. He found an ally in \*Hezekiah, who was at that time planning a revolt against Assyria, exploiting the latter's political goals for his own benefit. Hezekiah could help Merodach-Baladan by distracting the attention of the Assyrians to the west. This appears to be the background of the biblical narrative concerning the goodwill delegation sent by Merodach-Baladan to Hezekiah of Judah in 701 B.C.E. after Sennacherib's campaign there (II Kings 20:12–19; Isa. 39:1–8; II Chron. 32:31). However, it is doubtful that political conditions in Palestine after the Assyrian campaign were favorable for Merodach-Baladan and Hezekiah to form an alliance.

In 703 B.C.E. Sennacherib conducted a campaign against Merodach-Baladan, defeating the Elamite and Babylonian armies surrounding Kish. Merodach-Baladan fled to the "Sealands," and from there continued to rule over Bît-Iakin and the southernmost part of Babylonia. After Sennacherib returned from his campaign in the west in 701, he waged war against Merodach-Baladan (700). The Chaldeans were no match for the Assyrians, and Merodach-Baladan fled further along the Persian Gulf to the region bordering on Elam, dying there in



### **In the Aggadah**

Merodach-Baladan is praised for honoring his father. He added his father's name Baladan to his own when acting as regent during the incapacity of his father, and signed documents in the name of both his father and himself (Sanh. 96a). When told that the sun had reversed its course on the day that Hezekiah miraculously recovered from his illness, he acknowledged the superiority of God, though previously he had been a sun worshiper. He thereupon addressed a letter to Hezekiah the original introduction of which was "Peace to Hezekiah, Peace to the God of Hezekiah, and Peace to Jerusalem." Realizing, however, that he had been disrespectful in not placing God first, he took steps and recalled his messengers in order to change the wording. As a reward he was told: "You took three steps for the honor of My name ... I will therefore raise up from thee three kings [Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-Merodach, and Belshazzar], who shall rule from one end of the world to the other" (Est. R. 3:1).<sup>5</sup>

## **Volume VII. Book of comfort, 40:1-66:24**

### **Chapter 40**

#### **40. Comfort for delivered Israel**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter the prophet opens the subject respecting the restoration of the Church with great force and elegance; declaring God's command to his messengers the prophets to comfort his people in their captivity, and to impart to them the glad tidings that the time of favor and deliverance was at hand, Isaiah 40:1, Isaiah 40:2. Immediately a harbinger is introduced giving orders, as usual in the march of eastern monarchs, to remove every obstacle, and to prepare the way for their return to their own land, Isaiah 40:3-5. The same words, however, the New Testament Scriptures authorize us to refer to the opening of the Gospel dispensation. Accordingly, this subject, coming once in view, is principally attended to in the sequel. Of this the prophet gives us sufficient notice by introducing a voice commanding another proclamation, which calls of our

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<sup>5</sup> H.W.F. Saggs, *The Greatness that was Babylon* (1962), 109–20; J.A. Brinkman, in: *Studies Presented to A. Leo Oppenheim* (1964), 6–53; idem, in: JNES, 24 (1965), 161–6; P. Artzi, in: EM, 5 (1968), 445–9; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 4 (1913), 275, 300; 6 (1928), 368, 430; I.Y. Hasida, *Ishei ha-Tanakh* (1964), 269.



attention from all temporary, fading things to the spiritual and eternal things of the Gospel, Isaiah 40:6-11. And to remove every obstacle in the way of the prophecy in either sense, or perhaps to give a farther display of the character of the Redeemer, he enlarges on the power and wisdom of God, as the Creator and Disposer of all things. It is impossible to read this description of God, the most sublime that ever was penned, without being struck with inexpressible reverence and self-abasement. The contrast between the great Jehovah and every thing reputed great in this world, how admirably imagined, how exquisitely finished! What atoms and inanities are they all before Him who sitteth on the circle of the immense heavens, and views the potentates of the earth in the light of grasshoppers, - those poor insects that wander over the barren heath for sustenance, spend the day in continual chirpings, and take up their humble lodging at night on a blade of grass! Isaiah 40:12-26. The prophet concludes with a most comfortable application of the whole, by showing that all this infinite power and unsearchable wisdom is unweariedly and everlastingly engaged in strengthening, comforting, and saving his people, Isaiah 40:27-31.

The course of prophecies which follow, from hence to the end of the book, and which taken together constitute the most elegant part of the sacred writings of the Old Testament, interspersed also with many passages of the highest sublimity, was probably delivered in the latter part of the reign of Hezekiah. The prophet in the foregoing chapter had delivered a very explicit declaration of the impending dissolution of the kingdom, and of the captivity of the royal house of David, and of the people, under the kings of Babylon. As the subject of his subsequent prophecies was to be chiefly of the consolatory kind, he opens them with giving a promise of the restoration of the kingdom, and the return of the people from that captivity, by the merciful interposition of God in their favor. But the views of the prophet are not confined to this event. As the restoration of the royal family, and of the tribe of Judah, which would otherwise have soon become undistinguished, and have been irrecoverably lost, was necessary, in the design and order of Providence, for the fulfilling of God's promises of establishing a more glorious and an everlasting kingdom, under the Messiah to be born of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David, the prophet connects these two events together, and hardly ever treats of the former without throwing in some intimations of the latter; and sometimes is so fully possessed with the glories of the future and more remote kingdom, that he seems to leave the more immediate subject of his commission almost out of the question.

Indeed this evangelical sense of the prophecy is so apparent, and stands forth in so strong a light, that some interpreters cannot see that it has any other; and will not allow the prophecy to have any relation at all to the return from the captivity of Babylon. It may therefore be useful to examine more attentively the train of

the prophet's ideas, and to consider carefully the images under which he displays his subject. He hears a crier giving orders, by solemn proclamation, to Prepare the way of the Lord in the wilderness; to remove all obstructions before Jehovah marching through the desert; through the wild, uninhabited, impassable country. The deliverance of God's people from the Babylonish captivity is considered by him as parallel to the former deliverance of them from the Egyptian bondage. God was then represented as their king leading them in person through the vast deserts which lay in their way to the promised land of Canaan. It is not merely for Jehovah himself that in both cases the way was to be prepared, and all obstructions to be removed; but for Jehovah marching in person at the head of his people. Let us first see how this idea is pursued by the sacred poets who treat of the exodus, which is a favourite subject with them, and affords great choice of examples: -

"When Israel came out of Egypt,  
The house of Jacob from the barbarous people;  
Judah was his sanctuary, Israel his dominion."

*Psalm 114:1, Psalm 114:2.*

"Jehovah his God is with him;  
And the shout of a king is among them:  
God brought them out of Egypt" -

*Numbers 23:21, Numbers 23:22.*

"Make a highway for him that rideth through the deserts:  
O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people.  
When thou marchedst through the wilderness,  
The heavens dropped" -

*Psalm 68:4, Psalm 68:7.*

Let us now see how Isaiah treats the subject of the return of the people from Babylon. They were to march through the wilderness with Jehovah at their head,

who was to lead them, to smooth the way before them, and to supply them with water in the thirsty desert; with perpetual allusion to the exodus: -

"Come ye forth from Babylon, flee ye from the land of the Chaldeans with the voice of joy: Publish ye this, and make it heard; utter it forth even to the end of the earth; Say ye, Jehovah hath redeemed his servant Jacob: They thirsted not in the deserts, through which he made them go; Waters from the rock he caused to flow for them; Yea, he clave the rock, and forth gushed the waters." Isaiah 48:20, Isaiah 48:21.

"Remember not the former things;

And the things of ancient times regard not:"

(That is, the deliverance from Egypt):

"Behold, I make a new thing;

Even now shall it spring forth; will ye not regard it?

Yea, I will make in the wilderness a way;

In the desert streams of water."

*Isaiah 43:18, Isaiah 43:19.*

"But he that trusteth in me shall inherit the land,

And shall possess my holy mountain.

Then will I say: Cast up, cast up the causeway; make clear the way;

Remove every obstruction from the road of my people."

*Isaiah 57:13, Isaiah 57:14.*

"How beautiful appear on the mountains

The feet of the joyful messenger, of him that announceth peace;

Of the joyful messenger of good tidings, of him that announceth salvation;

Of him that saith to Sion, Thy God reigneth!

All thy watchmen lift up their voice, they shout together;  
For face to face shall they see, when Jehovah returneth to Sion.  
Verily not in haste shall ye go forth,  
And not by flight shall ye march along:  
For Jehovah shall march in your front;  
And the God of Israel shall bring up your rear."

*Isaiah 52:7, Isaiah 52:8, Isaiah 52:12.*

Babylon was separated from Judea by an immense tract of country which was one continued desert; that large part of Arabia called very properly Deserta. It is mentioned in history as a remarkable occurrence, that Nebuchadnezzar, having received the news of the death of his father, in order to make the utmost expedition in his journey to Babylon from Egypt and Phoenicia, set out with a few attendants, and passed through this desert. Berosus apud Joseph., Antiq. Isaiah 10:11. This was the nearest way homewards for the Jews; and whether they actually returned by this way or not, the first thing that would occur on the proposal or thought of their return would be the difficulty of this almost impracticable passage. Accordingly the proclamation for the preparation of the way is the most natural idea, and the most obvious circumstance, by which the prophet could have opened his subject.

These things considered, I have not the least doubt that the return at the Jews from the captivity of Babylon is the first, though not the principal, thing in the prophet's view. The redemption from Babylon is clearly foretold and at the same time is employed as an image to shadow out a redemption of an infinitely higher and more important nature. I should not have thought it necessary to employ so many words in endeavoring to establish what is called the literal sense of this prophecy, which I think cannot be rightly understood without it, had I not observed that many interpreters of the first authority, in particular the very learned Vitranga, have excluded it entirely.

Yet obvious and plain as I think this literal sense is, we have nevertheless the irrefragable authority of John the Baptist, and of our blessed Savior himself, as recorded by all the Evangelists, for explaining this exordium of the prophecy of the opening of the Gospel by the preaching of John, and of the introduction of the kingdom of Messiah; who was to effect a much greater deliverance of the people of God, Gentiles as well as Jews, from the captivity of sin and the

dominion of death. And this we shall find to be the case in many subsequent parts also of this prophecy, where passages manifestly relating to the deliverance of the Jewish nation, effected by Cyrus, are, with good reason, and upon undoubted authority, to be understood of the redemption wrought for mankind by Christ.

If the literal sense of this prophecy, as above explained, cannot be questioned, much less surely can the spiritual; which, I think, is allowed on all hands, even by Grotius himself. If both are to be admitted, here is a plain example of the mystical allegory, or double sense, as it is commonly called, of prophecy; which the sacred writers of the New Testament clearly suppose, and according to which they frequently frame their interpretation of passages from the Old Testament. Of the foundation and properties of this sort of allegory, see De S. Poes. Hebr. Praelect. xi.

### **Verses 1-11. The call and circumstances of the promised comfort**

#### **Verse 1**

**Comfort ye, comfort ye** - "The whole of this prophecy," says Kimchi, "belongs to the days of the Messiah."

#### **Verse 2**

**Double for all her sins "Blessings double to the punishment"** - It does not seem reconcilable to our notions of the Divine justice, which always punishes less than our iniquities deserve, to suppose that God had punished the sins of the Jews in double proportion; and it is more agreeable to the tenor of this consolatory message to understand it as a promise of ample recompense for the effects of past displeasure, on the reconciliation of God to his returning people. To express this sense of the passage, which the words of the original will very well bear, it was necessary to add a word or two in the version to supply the elliptical expression of the Hebrew. Compare Isaiah 61:7; Job 42:10; Zechariah 9:12. חַטָּאָה chattaah signifies punishment for sin, Lamentations 3:39; Zechariah 14:19. But Kimchi says, "Double here means the two captivities and emigrations suffered by the Israelites. The first, the Babylonish captivity; the second, that which they now endure." This is not a bad conjecture.

#### **Verse 3**

**The voice of him that crieth to the wilderness "A voice crieth, In the wilderness"** - The idea is taken from the practice of eastern monarchs, who,

whenever they entered upon an expedition or took a journey, especially through desert and unpractised countries, sent harbingers before them to prepare all things for their passage, and pioneers to open the passes, to level the ways, and to remove all impediments. The officers appointed to superintend such preparations the Latins call *stratores*. *Ipse (Johannes Baptista) se stratorem vocat Messiae, cujus esset alta et elata voce homines in desertis locis habitantes ad itinera et vias Regi mox venturo sternendas et reficiendas hortari.* - Mosheim, *Instituta, Majora*, p. 96. "He (John the Baptist) calls himself the pioneer of the Messiah, whose business it was with a loud voice to call upon the people dwelling in the deserts to level and prepare the roads by which the King was about to march."

Diodorus's account of the marches of Semiramis into Media and Persia will give us a clear notion of the preparation of the way for a royal expedition: "In her march to Ecbatana she came to the Zarcean mountain, which, extending many furlongs, and being full of craggy precipices and deep hollows, could not be passed without taking a great compass about. Being therefore desirous of leaving an everlasting memorial of herself, as well as of shortening the way, she ordered the precipices to be dugged down, and the hollows to be filled up; and at a great expense she made a shorter and more expeditious road, which to this day is called from her the road of Semiramis. Afterward she went into Persia, and all the other countries of Asia subject to her dominion; and wherever she went, she ordered the mountains and precipices to be levelled, raised causeways in the plain country, and at a great expense made the ways passable." - Diod. Sic. lib. ii.

The writer of the apocryphal book called Baruch expresses the same subject by the same images, either taking them from this place of Isaiah, or from the common notions of his countrymen: "For God hath appointed that every high hill, and banks of long continuance, should be cast down, and valleys filled up, to make even the ground, that Israel may go safely in the glory of God." Baruch 5:7.

The Jewish Church, to which John was sent to announce the coming of Messiah, was at that time in a barren and desert condition, unfit, without reformation, for the reception of her King. It was in this desert country, destitute at that time of all religious cultivation, in true piety and good works unfruitful, that John was sent to prepare the way of the Lord by preaching repentance. I have distinguished the parts of the sentence according to the punctuation of the Masoretes, which agrees best both with the literal and the spiritual sense; which the construction and parallelism of the distich in the Hebrew plainly favors, and of which the Greek of the Septuagint and of the evangelists is equally

susceptible. John was born in the desert of Judea, and passed his whole life in it, till the time of his being manifested to Israel. He preached in the same desert: it was a mountainous country; however not entirely and properly a desert; for though less cultivated than other parts of Judea, yet it was not uninhabited. Joshua ( Joshua 15:61, Joshua 15:62;) reckons six cities in it. We are so prepossessed with the idea of John's living and preaching in the desert, that we are apt to consider this particular scene of his preaching as a very important and essential part of history: whereas I apprehend this circumstance to be no otherwise important, than as giving us a strong idea of the rough character of the man, which was answerable to the place of his education; and as affording a proper emblem of the rude state of the Jewish Church at that time, which was the true wilderness meant by the prophet, in which John was to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah.

#### Verse 4

**Crooked** - The word עֲקֹב akob is very generally rendered crooked: but this sense of the word seems not to be supported by any good authority. Ludolphus, Comment. ad Hist. Aethiop. p. 206, says "that in the Ethiopia language it signifies *clivus, locus editus*:" and so the Syriac Version renders it in this place, עֲרָמָה arama : Hebrew, עֲרָמָה aramah, *tumulus, acervus*. Thus the parallelism would be more perfect:" the hilly country shall be made level, and the precipices a smooth plain."

#### Verse 5

**"The salvation of our God"** - These words are added here by the Septuagint: τὸ σωτηρίου τοῦ Θεοῦ, יְשׁוּעַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ, eth yesuath Eloheynu, as it is in the parallel place, Isaiah 52:10. The sentence is abrupt without it, the verb wanting its object; and I think it is genuine. Our English translation has supplied the word it, which is equivalent to this addition, from the Septuagint.

This omission in the Hebrew text is ancient, being prior to the Chaldee, Syriac, and Vulgate Versions: but the words stand in all the copies of the Septuagint, and they are acknowledged by Luke, Luke 3:6. The whole of this verse is wanting in one of my oldest MSS.

#### Verse 6

**The voice saint Cry "A voice saith Proclaim"** - To understand rightly this passage is a matter of importance; for it seems designed to give us the true key to the remaining part of Isaiah's prophecies, the general subject of which is the



restoration of the people and Church of God. The prophet opens the subject with great clearness and elegance: he declares at once God's command to his messengers, (his prophets, as the Chaldee rightly explains it), to comfort his people in captivity, to impart to them the joyful tidings, that their punishment has now satisfied the Divine justice, and the time of reconciliation and favor is at hand. He then introduces a harbinger giving orders to prepare the way for God, leading his people from Babylon, as he did formerly from Egypt, through the wilderness, to remove all obstacles, and to clear the way for their passage.

Thus far nothing more appears to be intended than a return from the Babylonish captivity; but the next words seem to intimate something much greater: -

"And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed;

And all flesh shall see together the salvation of our God."

He then introduces a voice commanding him to make a solemn proclamation. And what is the import of it? that the people - the flesh, is of a vain temporary nature; that all its glory fadeth, and is soon gone; but that the word of God endureth for ever. What is this, but a plain opposition of the flesh to the spirit; of the carnal Israel to the spiritual; of the temporary Mosaic economy to the eternal Christian dispensation? You may be ready to conclude, (the prophet may be disposed to say), by this introduction to my discourse, that my commission is only to comfort you with a promise of the restoration of your religion and polity, of Jerusalem, of the temple, and its services and worship in all its ancient splendor. These are earthly, temporary, shadowy, fading things, which shall soon pass away, and be destroyed for ever; these are not worthy to engage your attention in comparison of the greater blessings, the spiritual redemption, the eternal inheritance, covered under the veil of the former, which I have it in charge to unfold unto you. The law has only a shadow of good things; the substance is the Gospel. I promise you a restoration of the former, which, however, is only for a time, and shall be done away, according to God's original appointment: but under that image I give you a view of the latter, which shall never be done away, but shall endure for ever. This I take to be agreeable to St. Peter's interpretation of this passage of the prophet, quoted by him, 1 Peter 1:24, 1 Peter 1:25; : "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." This is the same word of the Lord of which Isaiah speaks, which hath now been preached unto you by the Gospel. The law and the Gospel are frequently opposed to one another by St. Paul, under the images of flesh and

spirit: "Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"  
Galatians 3:3.

**All the Godliness thereof - "All its glory"** - For חסדו chasdo read חדו chadu ;  
the Septuagint and Vulgate, and 1 Peter 1:24.

## Verse 7

**The grass withereth** - The whole of this verse is wanting in three of Kennicott's and five of De Rossi's MSS., and in a very correct and ancient MS. of my own, and also in the Septuagint and Arabic.

**Surely the people "Verily this people"** - So the Syriac; who perhaps read הוזה haam hazzeh .

**Because the spirit of the Lord "When the wind of Jehovah"** - רוח יהוה ruach Jehovah, a wind of Jehovah, is a Hebraism, meaning no more than a strong wind. It is well known that a hot wind in the east destroys every green thing. Compare Psalm 103:16. Two MSS. omit the word יהוה Yehovah, Jehovah.

## Verse 9

**O Zion, that bringest good tidings "O daughter, that bringest glad tidings to Zion"** - That the true construction of the sentence is this, which makes Zion the receiver, not the publisher, of the glad tidings, which latter has been the most prevailing interpretation, will, I think, very clearly appear, if we rightly consider the image itself, and the custom and common practice from which it is taken. I have added the word daughter to express the feminine gender of the Hebrew participle, which I know not how to do otherwise in our language; and this is absolutely necessary in order to ascertain the image. For the office of announcing and celebrating such glad tidings as are here spoken of, belongs peculiarly to the women. On occasion of any great public success, a signal victory, or any other joyful event, it was usual for the women to gather together, and with music, dances, and songs, to publish and celebrate the happy news. Thus after the passage of the Red Sea, Miriam, and all the women, with timbrels in their hands, formed a chorus, and joined the men in their triumphant song, dancing, and throwing in alternately the refrain or burden of the song: -

"Sing ye to Jehovah, for he is greatly exalted;

The horse and his rider hath he cast into the sea."

*Exodus 15:20, Exodus 15:21.*

So Jephthah's daughter collected a chorus of virgins, and with dances and songs came out to meet her father, and to celebrate his victory, Judges 11:34. After David's conquest of Goliath, "all the women came out of the cities of Israel singing and dancing to meet Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music;" and, forming themselves into two choruses, they sang alternately: -

"Saul has slain his thousands:

And David his ten thousands."

*1 Samuel 18:6, 1 Samuel 18:7.*

And this gives us the true sense of a passage in the sixty-eighth Psalm, which has frequently been misunderstood: -

"Jehovah gave the word, (that is, the joyful news),

The women, who published the glad tidings, were a great company;

The kings of mighty armies did flee, did flee:

And even the matron, who stayed at home, shared the spoil."

The word signifying the publishers of glad tidings is the same, and expressed in the same form by the feminine participle, as in this place, and the last distich is the song which they sang. So in this place, Jehovah having given the word by his prophet, the joyful tidings of the restoration of Zion, and of God's returning to Jerusalem, (see Isaiah 52:8;), the women are exhorted by the prophet to publish the joyful news with a loud voice from eminences, whence they might best be heard all over the country; and the matter and burden of their song was to be, "Behold your God!" See on Psalm 68:11; (note).

## **Verse 10**

**His reward is with him, and his work before him. "His reward is with him, and the recompense of his work before him" -** That is, the reward and the recompense which he bestows, and which he will pay to his faithful servants; this he has ready at hand with him, and holds it out before him, to encourage those who trust in him and wait for him.

## Verse 11

**Shall gently lead those that are with young** "The nursing ewes shall he gently lead" - A beautiful image, expressing, with the utmost propriety as well as elegance, the tender attention of the shepherd to his flock. That the greatest care in driving the cattle in regard to the dams and their young was necessary, appears clearly from Jacob's apology to his brother Esau, Genesis 33:13; : "The flocks and the herds giving suck to their young are with me; and if they should be overdriven, all the flock will die." Which is set in a still stronger light by the following remark of Sir John Chardin: "Their flocks," says he, speaking of those who now live in the east after the patriarchal manner, "feed down the places of their encampments so quick, by the great numbers that they have, that they are obliged to remove them too often, which is very destructive to their flocks, on account of the young ones, who have not strength enough to follow." Harmer's Observ. i., p. 126.

## Verses 12-26. The character of the Comforter

### Verse 16

**And Lebanon is not sufficient** - The image is beautiful and uncommon. It has been imitated by an apocryphal writer, who however comes far short of the original: -

"For all sacrifice is too little for a sweet savor unto thee:

And all the fat is not sufficient for thy burnt-offering."

*Judith 16:16.*

Does not the prophet mean here that all the burnt-offerings and sacrifices that could be offered were insufficient to atone for sin? That the nations were as nothing before him, not merely because of his immensity, but because of their insufficiency to make any atonement by their oblations for the iniquities which they had committed? Therefore the Redeemer was to come to Zion, etc.

### Verse 19

**And casteth silver chains** "And forgeth for it chains of silver" - For צורף tsoreph, the participle, twenty-seven MSS., five ancient, and three editions, read צרף tsaraph, pret. third person.

### Verse 20

**Chooseth a tree that will not rot** - For what? To make a god out of it! The rich we find made theirs of gold and silver; the poor man was obliged to put up with a wooden god! From the words "he that hath no oblation chooseth a tree," we may learn that the gold and silver necessary to make the graven image was first dedicated, and then formed into a god! How stupid is idolatry! Strange that these people did not perceive that there could be no help in these molten and wooden idols!

## Verse 21

**Have ye not known** - On this verse Kimchi has a very interesting comment, an extract of which I subjoin. "The whole world may be considered as a house built up; heaven its roof; the stars its lamps; and the fruits of the earth its table spread. The Master of the house is God, blessed for ever; and man is the steward into whose hand all the business of the house is given. If he always consider in his heart that the Master of the house is continually over him, and that he keeps his eye upon his work, and if in consequence he acts wisely, he shall find favor in the eyes of the Master of the house. But if he find wickedness in the house, then will he remove him מן פקידתו min pekidutho, 'from his stewardship.' The foolish steward does not think of this; for as his eyes do not see the Master of the house, he saith in his heart, 'I will eat and drink what I find in this house, and will take my pleasure in it; nor shall I be careful whether there be a master over this house or not.' When the Lord of the house marks this, he comes and expels him from the house speedily, and with great anger; therefore it is said, Isaiah 40:23, He bringeth the princes to nothing." It seems that this parable had been long in use among the Jews, as our blessed Lord alludes to it in his parable of the unjust steward. Or did the rabbin, finding it to his purpose, steal the parable from the Gospel? In both places it has great and peculiar beauties.

**Have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth "Have ye not understood it from the foundations of the earth?"** - The true reading seems to be ממוסדות mimmosedoth, to answer to מראש merosh in the foregoing line. It follows a word ending with מ mem, and out of three mems concurring, it was an easy mistake to drop the middle one.

## Verse 22

**As a curtain "As a thin veil"** - "It is usual in the summer season, and upon all occasions when a large company is to be received, to have the court sheltered from heat or inclemency of the weather by a velum, umbrella, or veil, as I shall call it; which being expanded on ropes from one side of the parapet wall to the other, may be folded or unfolded at pleasure. The psalmist seems to allude to

some covering of this kind in that beautiful expression of spreading out the heavens like a curtain." - Shaw's Travels, p. 274.

#### Verse 24

**And he shall also blow upon them "And if he but blow upon them"** - The Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and MS. Bodl., with another, have גמ gam, only, without the conjunction ו vau, and.

#### Verse 26

**Left up your eyes on high** - The rabbins say, He who is capable of meditating on the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and does not meditate on them, is not worthy to have his name mentioned among men.

#### Verses 27-31. The prescription for present comfort

#### Verse 28

**There is no searching of his understanding "And that his understanding is unsearchable"** - Twenty-four MSS., two editions, the Septuagint and Vulgate, read וין veein, with the conjunction ו vau .

#### Verse 31

**They shall mount zap with wings as eagles "They shall put forth fresh feathers like the moulting eagle"** - It has been a common and popular opinion that the eagle lives and retains his vigor to a great age; and that, beyond the common lot of other birds, he moults in his old age, and renews his feathers, and with them his youth. "Thou shalt renew thy youth like the eagle," says the psalmist, Psalm 103:5; on which place St. Ambrose notes, *Aquila longam aetatem ducit, dum, vetustis plumis fatiscentibus, nova pennarum successione juvenescit*: "The eagle lives to a very advanced age; and in moulting his youth is renewed with his new feathers." Phile, De Animalibus, treating of the eagle, and addressing himself to the emperor Michael Palaeologus junior, raises his compliment upon the same notion: -

Τουτου συ, βασιλευ, τον πολυν ζωις βιον -144 Αει νεουργων, και κρατυνων την φυσινπ .

"Long may'st thou live, O king; still like the eagle

Renew thy youth, and still retain thy vigor."

To this many fabulous and absurd circumstances are added by several ancient writers and commentators on Scripture; see Bochart, Hieroz. 2 ii. 1. Rabbi Saadiah says, Every tenth year the eagle flies near the sun; and when not able any longer to bear the burning heat, she falls down into the sea, and soon loses her feathers, and thus renews her vigor. This she does every tenth year till the hundredth, when, after she has ascended near the sun, and fallen into the sea, she rises no more. How much proof do such stories require! Whether the notion of the eagle's renewing his youth is in any degree well founded or not, I need not inquire; it is enough for a poet, whether profane or sacred, to have the authority of popular opinion to support an image introduced for illustration or ornament. -

## Chapter 41

### 41. The Lord's case against idolatry

#### Introduction

The prophet, having intimated the deliverance from Babylon, and the still greater redemption couched under it, resumes the subject. He begins with the Divine vocation of Abraham, the root of the Israelitish family, and his successful exploits against the idolaters, Isaiah 41:1-7. He then recurs to the Babylonish captivity, and encourages the seed of Abraham, the friend of God, not to fear, as all their enemies would be ultimately subdued under them, Isaiah 41:8-16; and every thing furnished necessary to refresh and comfort them in their passage homewards through the desert, Isaiah 41:17-20. The prophet then takes occasion to celebrate the prescience of God, from his knowledge of events so very distant as instanced in the prediction concerning the messenger of glad tidings which should be given to Jerusalem to deliver her from all her enemies; and challenges the idols of the heathen to produce the like proof of their pretended divinity, Isaiah 41:21-27. But they are all vanity, and accursed are they that choose them, Isaiah 41:28, Isaiah 41:29.

#### Verses 1-7. Idolaters are arraigned

##### Verse 1

**Keep silence before me, O islands "Let the distant nations repair to me with new force of mind"** - Εἰσακούσθε, Septuagint. For החרישו hacharishu, be silent, they certainly read in their copy החדישו hachadishu, be renewed; which is parallel and synonymous with יחלפו yechalephu coach, "recover their strength;" that is, their strength of mind, their powers of reason; that they may overcome those prejudices by which they have been so long held enslaved to idolatry. A MS. has הר har, upon a rasure. The same mistake seems to have been



made in this word, Zephaniah 3:17. For יַחַרִּישׁ בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ yacharish beahabatho, *silebit in directions sua*, as the Vulgate renders it; which seems not consistent with what immediately follows, *exultabit super te in laude*; the Septuagint and Syriac read יַחַדִּישׁ בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ yachadish beahabatho, "he shall be renewed in his love." אֵלַי elai, to me, is wanting in one of De Rossi's MSS. and in the Syriac.

## Verse 2

**The righteous man** - The Chaldee and Vulgate seem to have read צַדִּיק tsaddik . But Jerome, though his translation has *justum*, appears to have read צֶדֶק tsedek ; for in his comment he expresses it by *justum, sive justitiam*. However, I think all interpreters understand it of a person. So the Septuagint in MS. Pachom. ἐκάλεσεν αὐτον, "he hath called him;" but the other copies have αὐτην, her. They are divided in ascertaining this person; some explain it of Abraham, others of Cyrus. I rather think that the former is meant; because the character of the righteous man, or righteousness, agrees better with Abraham than with Cyrus. Besides, immediately after the description of the success given by God to Abraham and his posterity, (who, I presume, are to be taken into the account), the idolaters are introduced as greatly alarmed at this event. Abraham was called out of the east; and his posterity were introduced into the land of Canaan, in order to destroy the idolaters of that country, and they were established there on purpose to stand as a barrier against the idolatry then prevailing, and threatening to overrun the whole face of the earth. Cyrus, though not properly an idolater or worshipper of images, yet had nothing in his character to cause such an alarm among the idolaters, Isaiah 41:5-7. Farther, after having just touched upon that circumstance, the prophet with great ease returns to his former subject, and resumes Abraham and the Israelites; and assures them that as God had called them, and chosen them for this purpose, he would uphold and support them to the utmost, and at length give them victory over all the heathen nations, their enemies; Isaiah 41:8-16. Kimchi is of the same mind and gives the same reasons.

**He gave them as the dust to his sword "Hath made them like the dust before his sword"** - The image is strong and beautiful; it is often made use of by the sacred poets; see Psalm 1:4; Psalm 35:6; Job 21:18, and by Isaiah himself in other places, Isaiah 17:13; Isaiah 29:5. But there is great difficulty in making out the construction. The Septuagint read קַשְׁתָּם חֶרֶבם kashtam, charbam, their sword, their bow, understanding it of the sword and bow of the conquered kings: but this is not so agreeable to the analogy of the image, as employed in other places. The Chaldee paraphrast and Kimchi solve the difficulty by supposing an ellipsis of לִפְנֵי liphney before those words. It must be owned that the ellipsis is hard and unusual: but I choose rather to submit to this, than, by adhering with

Vitringa to the more obvious construction, to destroy entirely both the image and the sense. But the Vulgate by *gladio ejus*, to his sword, and *arcui ejus*, to his bow, seems to express להחרבו lecharbo, to his sword, and לקשתו lekashto, to his bow, the admission of which reading may perhaps be thought preferable to Kimchi's ellipsis.

### Verse 3

**And passed safely "He passeth in safety"** - The preposition seems to have been omitted in the text by mistake; the Septuagint and Vulgate seem to have had it in their copies; εν ειρηη, to pace, בשלום beshalom, "prosperously." It is so in one of De Rossi's MSS.

### Verse 4

**Who hath wrought and done it "Who hath performed and made these things"** - A word is here lost out of the text. It is supplied by an ancient MS., אלה elleh, "these things; "and by the Septuagint, ταυτα ; and by the Vulgate, *haec*; and by the Chaldee, אֵלִין elin ; all of the same meaning.

### Verse 5

**Were afraid "And they were terrified"** - Three MSS. have ויחרדו vaiyecheridu, adding the conjunction ו vau, which restores the second member of the sentence to its true poetical form.

### Verse 7

**That it should not be moved "That it shall not move"** - Five MSS., (two ancient), and the ancient Versions, add the conjunction ו vau, "and, "reading ולא velo, "and not, "which seems to be right.

## Verses 8-20. God's people are encouraged

### Verse 9

**And called thee from the chief men thereof "And called from the extremities thereof"** - אציל מאציליה atsil meatsileyha, signifies the arm, *ascilla*, *ala*; and is used like כנף canaph, "the wing, "for any thing extended from the extremity of another, or joined on to it. It is here parallel with and synonymous to מקצות mikkatsoth, "from the ends, "in the preceding member.

## Verse 10

**Be not dismayed** - ואל תשתע veal tishta, "And be not dismayed. "The ו vau is added by twenty-one of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., thirty of De Rossi's, and one of my own, and three editions. It makes the sense more complete.

## Verse 14

**Fear not, thou worm Jacob** - In the rabbinical commentary on the five books of Moses, Yelamedenu, it is asked, Why are the Israelites called a worm? To signify, that as the worm does not smite, that is, gnaw the cedars, but with its mouth, which is very tender, yet it nevertheless destroys the hard wood; so all the strength of the Israelites is in prayer, by which they smite the wicked of this world, though strong like the cedars, to which they are compared, Ezekiel 31:3.

## Verse 15

**A new sharp threshing instrument having teeth "A threshing wain; a new corn-drag armed with pointed teeth"** - See note on Isaiah 28:27-28.

**Thou shalt thresh the mountains** - Mountains and hills are here used metaphorically for the kings and princes of the Gentiles. - Kimchi.

## Verse 19

**I will plant in the wilderness the cedar** - The two preceding verses express God's mercy to them in their passage through the dry deserts, in supplying them with abundant water, when distressed with thirst, in allusion to the exodus. This verse expresses the relief afforded to them, fainting with heat in their journey through that hot country, destitute of shelter, by causing shady trees, and those of the tallest and most beautiful kinds, to spring up for their defense. The apocryphal Baruch, speaking of the return from Babylon, expresses God's protection of his people by the same image: "Even the woods and every sweet-smelling tree shall overshadow Israel by the commandment of God." 5:8.

**The oil tree** - This, Kimchi says, is not to be understood of the olive tree, for the olive is distinguished, Nehemiah 8:15; but it means the pine or fir, from which pitch is extracted.

## Verse 20

**And consider** - The verb ישימו yasimu, without לב leb added, cannot signify to apply the heart, or to attend to a thing, as Houbigant has observed; he therefore

reads יִשְׁמוּ yashshemu, they shall wonder. The conjecture is ingenious; but it is much more probable that the word לֵב leb is lost out of the text; for all the ancient versions render the phrase to the same sense, as if it were fully expressed, יִשְׁמוּ לֵב yasimu leb ; and the Chaldee renders it paraphrastically, yet still retaining the very words in his paraphrase, וְשׁוֹן דְּחַלְתִּי עַל לְבָהוֹן vishavvun dechalti al lebehon, "that they may put my fear in their heart." See also Isaiah 41:22, where the same phrase is used.

## **Verses 21-24. The idols themselves are challenged**

### **Verse 21**

**Bring forth your strong reasons "Produce these your mighty powers"** - "Let your idols come forward which you consider to be so very strong. "Hieron. in loc. I prefer this to all other interpretations of this place; and to Jerome's own translation of it, which he adds immediately after, *Afferte, si quid forte habetis*. "Bring it forward, if haply ye have any thing." The false gods are called upon to come forth and appear in person; and to give evident demonstration of their foreknowledge and power by foretelling future events, and exerting their power in doing good or evil.

### **Verse 23**

**That we may be dismayed, and behold it together "Then shall we be struck at once with admiration and terror"** - The word וְנִרְאָה venere is written imperfectly in the Hebrew text; the Masoretes supply הָ he at the end; and so it is read in twenty-two MSS. and four editions; that is, וְנִרְאָה venireh, and we shall see. But the true reading seems to be וְנִירְאָה venira, and we shall fear, with יָ yod supplied, from יָרָא yara .

### **Verse 24**

**Your work of naught "Your operation is less than naught"** - For מַעֲפֵּה meepha, read מַעֲפֵּס meephes ; so the Chaldee and Vulgate. A manifest error of the text; compare Isaiah 40:17. The rabbins acknowledge no such error, but say that the former word signifies the same with the latter, by a change of the two letters ס samech and ע ain . - Sal ben Melec in loc.

## Verses 25-29. The Lord Himself produces proof of His sole deity

### Verse 25

**I have raised up one from the north** - "That is, "says Kimchi, "the Messiah. The king of Assyria placed the ten tribes in Chalach and Chabar by the river Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, 2 Kings 17:6, which lands lie northerly and easterly."

**He shall come upon princes "He shall trample on princes"** - For יבא yabo, Le Clerc reads יבס yebes, from the Chaldee, who seems to read both words. "Forte legend. ויבס vaiyebes vel וירמס vaiyirmos : *sequitur* ס ." "This should perhaps be read ויבס vaiyebes, or וירמס vaiyirmos : a ס samech follows." - Secker. See Nahum 3:14.

### Verse 26

**Your word** - אמרתיהם imrnttheychem ; but, instead of this, one of my most ancient MSS. has דבריכם dibreychem . The meaning is nearly the same: but in this reading this His. is singular.

### Verse 27

**The first shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them "I first to Zion gave the word, Behold they are here"** - This verse is somewhat obscure by the transposition of the parts of the sentence, and the peculiar manner in which it is divided into two parallel lines. The verb at the end of the sentence belongs to both parts; and the phrase, Behold, they are here! is parallel to the messenger of glad tidings; and stands like it, as the accusative case to the verb. The following paraphrase will explain the form and the sense of it. "I first, by my prophets, give notice of these events, saying, Behold, they are at hand! and I give to Jerusalem a messenger of glad tidings."

### Verse 28

**Among them "Among the idols"** - For ומאלה umeelleh, I read ומאלים umeellim, with the Septuagint, και απο των ειδωλων, "and from or among the idols. "See Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 57:5.

R. D. Kimchi has many good observations on this chapter. Bishop Lowth follows him in applying it to Abraham, and not to Cyrus; the whole being spoken in the past tense, which is not used, or rarely, in such a case for the

future. Almost the whole of the rabbins understand it of Abraham. On Kimchi's plan, the following is a paraphrase.

**The righteous man** - Abram, from the east - the land of his nativity, called the land of the children of the east, Genesis 29:1.

**Brought him to his feet** - Whithersoever his feet went, he preached righteousness and truth; as it is written, "There he proclaimed in the name of Jehovah," Genesis 21:31. And he called it ויקראהו vaiykraehu - that is, צדק tsedek, righteousness, to his feet, enabled him to hold it forth wherever he went.

He called the nations - To leave their idols and worship him who made the universe. He taught them the way of righteousness, truth, and faith. Was there ever a prodigy like to this? A man who had been an idolater, rising up against all the nations of the earth, reproving their faith, and not fearing before them nor their kings! Who stirred up his heart to do this? Was it not the Lord?

Gave the nations before him - And made him rule over kings - Chedorlaomer, and the kings which were with him: whom the Lord gave as dust to his sword, and stubble to his bow.

He pursued them - He and his three hundred and eighteen servants.

He passed safely - שלום shalom for בשלום beshalom, in safety; so said, because he lost not one of his men in this expedition. See Kimchi.

## **Chapter 42**

### **42. The Messiah-Servant of the Lord**

#### **Introduction**

The prophet sets forth the meekness of Messiah's character, and the extent and blessings of his kingdom, particularly among the Gentiles, Isaiah 42:1-9. In consequence of this he calls on the whole creation to join him in one song of praise to God, Isaiah 42:10-12. After which he seems again to glance at the deliverance from the captivity; although the words may full as well apply to the deliverance vouchsafed to the Church; to the overthrow of her most powerful enemies; and to the prevalency of true religion over idolatry and error, Isaiah 42:13-17. The prophet then reproves the Jews for their blindness and infidelity in rejecting the Messiah, and gives intimations of these judgments which their guilt would draw on them, Isaiah 42:18-25.

The prophet, having opened his subject with the preparation for the return from captivity at Babylon, and intimated that a much greater deliverance was covered under the veil of that event, proceeded to vindicate the power of God, as Creator and disposer of all things; and his infinite knowledge, from his prediction of future events, and in particular of that deliverance. He went still farther, and pointed out the instrument by which he should effect the redemption of his people the Jews from slavery; namely, a great conqueror, whom he would call forth from the north and the east to execute his orders. In this chapter he proceeds to the greater deliverance; and at once brings forth into full view, without throwing any veil of allegory over the subject, the Messiah. "Behold my servant, Messiah," says the Chaldee. St. Matthew has applied it directly to Christ; nor can it with any justice or propriety be applied to any other person or character whatever.

### Verses 1-4. God (the Father) presents the Servant.

#### Verse 1

**Behold my servant, whom I uphold** - בו אתמך ethmach bo, on whom I lean. Alluding to the custom of kings leaning on the arm of their most beloved and faithful servant. All, both Jews and Christians, agree, that the seven first verses of this chapter belong to Christ. Now, as they are evidently a continuation of the prophecy in the preceding chapter, that prophecy cannot belong to Cyrus, but to Christ.

**He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles "He shall publish judgment to the nations"** - Four MSS. two ancient, add the conjunction ומשפט vemishpat . See Matthew 12:18.

The word משפט mishpat, judgment, like צדקה tsedakah, righteousness, is taken in a great latitude of signification. It means rule, form, order, model, plan; rule of right, or of religion; an ordinance, institution; judicial process, cause, trial, sentence, condemnation, acquittal, deliverance, mercy, etc. It certainly means in this place the law to be published by Messiah, the institution of the Gospel.

#### Verse 4

**He shall not fail nor be discouraged "His force shall not be abated nor broken"** - *Rabbi Meir ita citat locum istum, ut post ירוץ yaruts, addat כוחו cocho, robur ejus, quod hodie Ilon comparet in textu Hebraeo, sed addendum videtur, ut sensus fiat planior.*



"Rabbi Meir cites this passage so as to add after ירוץ yarats כוחו cocho, his force, which word is not found in the present Hebrew text, but seems necessary to be added to make the sense more distinct." Capell. Crit. Sac. p. 382. For which reason I had added it in the translation, before I observed this remark of Capellus.

## **Verses 5-9. The prophesy of the Servant's ministry**

### **Verse 6**

**A covenant of the people "A covenant to the people"** - For עמ am, two MSS. of Dr. Kennicott's, and of my own, read עולם olam, the covenant of the age to come, or the everlasting covenant; which seems to give a clearer and better sense. But I think the word ברית berith, here, should not be translated covenant, but covenant sacrifice, which meaning it often has; and undoubtedly in this place. This gives a still stronger and clearer sense.

### **Verse 7**

**To open the blind eyes** - In this verse the prophet seems to set forth the spiritual redemption, under images borrowed from the temporal deliverance.

**Out of the prison house "And from the dungeon"** - The Septuagint, Syriac, and four MSS., one ancient, add the conjunction ו vau, ומבית umibbeith, and from the house.

### **Verse 8**

**I am the Lord** - אני יהוה ani Yehovah . This is the famous tetragrammaton, or name of four letters, which we write Jehovah Yehovah, Yehveh, Yeveh, Jhuh, Javah, etc. The letters are Y H U H. The Jews never pronounce it, and the true pronunciation is utterly unknown.

**That is my name** - A name peculiar to myself.

## **Verses 10-12. Expression of praise and worship to God for the coming Servant**

### **Verse 10**

**Ye that go down to the sea** - This seems not to belong to this place; it does not well consist with what follows, "and the fullness thereof." They that go down upon the sea means navigators, sailors, traders, such as do business in great

waters; an idea much too confined for the prophet, who means the sea in general, as it is used by the Hebrews, for the distant nations, the islands, the dwellers on the sea-coasts all over the world. I suspect that some transcriber had the Psalm 107:23; verse of Psalm 107 running in his head, יורדי הים באניות yoredey haiyam booniyoth, and wrote in this place יורדי הים yoredey haiyam instead of ירעם הים yiram haiyam, or יריע yari, or ירן yaran ; "let the sea roar, or shout, or exult." But as this is so different in appearance from the present reading, I do not take the liberty of introducing it into the translation. *Conjeceram legendum יגידו yegidu, ut Isaiah 42:12; sed non favent Versiones.* "I would propose to read יגידו yegidu, as in Isaiah 42:12; but this is not supported by the Versions." - Secker.

## Verse 11

**Let the wilderness** - The most uncultivated countries, and the most rude and uncivilized people, shall confess and celebrate with thanksgiving the blessing of the knowledge of God graciously imparted to them. By the desert is meant Arabia Deserta; by the rocky country, Arabia Petraea; by the mountains, probably those celebrated ones, Paran, Horeb, Sinai, in the same country; to which also belonged Kedar, a clan of Arabians, dwelling for the most part in tents; but there were others of them who inhabited or frequented cities and villages, as may be collected from this place of the prophet. Pietro della Valle, speaking of the people of Arabia Deserta, says: "There is a sort of Arabs of that country called Maedi, who with their herds, of buffaloes for the most part, sometimes live in the deserts, and sometimes in cities; from whence they have their name, which signifies wandering, going from place to place. They have no professed houses; nor are they properly Bedaui, or Beduui, that is, Deserticoli, who are the most noble among them, and never abide within walls, but always go wandering through the open country with their black tents; nor are they properly called Hhadesi, as they call those who dwell in cities, and lands with fixed houses. These by the latter are esteemed ignoble and base; but both are considered as of low condition." *Viaggi, Parte 3 lett. ii.*

**The villages that Kedar doth inhabit** - The Arabs, according to the Targum.

**The inhabitants of the rock** - They who dwell on fortified places. The Vulgate has *habitatores Petraeae*, "the inhabitants of Arabia Petraea." Those who make the rock Jesus Christ, the inhabitants of the rock, true believers in him; the singing, rejoicing for the salvation they have received; abuse and disgrace the passage and the pulpit. I have heard a clergyman, a magistrate, a justice of the quorum, spend an hour in showing from these words,

1. That they meant Jesus Christ, and none other.

- That he might be fully compared to a rock, as the foundation on which his Church was built, and on which all true believers rested for their salvation.
- A rock, because of his strength and might in destroying his enemies, and supporting his friends.
- A refreshing rock, like that in the wilderness; and that rock was Christ. 5. A perspective rock, from which true believers could discover their heavenly inheritance: "When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I, "etc. Now all this is true in itself; but false in respect to the words on which it was professedly built, for they have no such meaning.

## Verses 13-17. Prediction of the Servant's vengeance

### Verse 14

**I have been still "Shall I keep silence for ever"** - After מעולם meolam, in the copy which the Septuagint had before them, followed the word הלעולם , heleolam, εσωπησα απ 'αιωνος: Μη και αι σωπησομαι: according to MSS. Pachom. and 50. D. 2 and Edit. Complut., which word, הלעולם haleolam, has been omitted in the text by an easy mistake of a transcriber, because of the similitude of the word preceding. Shall I always keep silences like that of Juvenal: *Semper ego auditor tantum?* Shall I always be a hearer only?

### Verse 15

**I wilt make the rivers islands "I will make the rivers dry deserts"** - Instead of איים iyim, islands, read ציים tsiim ; a very probable conjecture of Houbigant.

### Verse 16

**In paths** - The Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and nine MSS., (two ancient), read ובנתיבות ubenotiboth .

**Will I do unto them** - עשיתם asitem . This word, so written as it is in the text, means "thou wilt do, "in the second person. The Masoretes have indeed pointed it for the first person; but the י yod in the last syllable is absolutely necessary to distinguish the first person; and so it is written in forty MSS., עשיתים asithim .

Jarchi, Kimchi, Sal. ben Melec, etc., agree that the past time is here put for the future, עשיתי asithi for אעשה ; and indeed the context necessarily requires that interpretation. Farther it is to be observed that עשיתם asithim is put for עשיתי להם asithi lahem, "I have done them," for "I have done for them;" as עשיתני asitheni is for עשיתי לי asithi li, "I have made myself," for "I have made for myself," Ezekiel 29:2; and in the celebrated passage of Jephthah's vow, Judges 11:31, והעליתיו עולה veheelitihu olah for העליתי לו עולה heelithi lo olah, "I will offer him a burnt-offering, "for "I will offer unto him (that is, unto Jehovah) a burnt-offering;" by an ellipsis of the preposition of which Buxtorf gives many other examples, Thes. Grammat. lib. 2:17. See also note on Isaiah 65:5. A late happy application of this grammatical remark to that much disputed passage has perfectly cleared up a difficulty which for two thousand years had puzzled all the translators and expositors, had given occasion to dissertations without number, and caused endless disputes among the learned on the question, whether Jephthah sacrificed his daughter or not; in which both parties have been equally ignorant of the meaning of the place, of the state of the fact, and of the very terms of the vow; which now at last has been cleared up beyond all doubt by my learned friend Dr. Randolph, Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford, in his Sermon on Jephthah's Vow, Oxford, 1766.

## **Verses 18-25. Exposure and reproof of Israel the unfaithful servant**

### **Verse 19**

**As my messenger that I sent "As he to whom I have sent my messengers" -** כמלאכי אשלח kemalachey eshlach, *ut ad quem nuncios meos misi*. The Vulgate and Chaldee are almost the only interpreters who render it rightly, in consistence with the rest of the sentence, and in perfect agreement with the Hebrew idiom; according to which the ellipsis is to be thus supplied: כלאשר מלאכי אשלח kelaasher malachey eshlach ; "As he to whom I have sent my messengers."

**As he that is perfect "As he who is perfectly instructed" -** See note on Isaiah 44:2; (note).

**And blind as the Lord's servant "And deaf, as the servant of Jehovah" -** For ועור veivver, and blind, we must read וחרש vecheresh, and deaf: κωφος, Symmachus, and so a MS. The mistake is palpable, and the correction self-evident, and admissible though there had been no authority for it.

## Verse 20

**Seeing many things "Thou hast seen indeed"** - The text has ראית רבית raith rabith, which the Masoretes in the marginal Keri have corrected to ראות רבות reoth rabboth ; as indeed one hundred and seven MSS., and five editions, now have it in the text. This was probably the reading of most of the MSS. of their time; which, though they approved of it, out of some superstition they would not admit into their standard text. But these wretched critics, though they perceived there was some fault, yet did not know where the fault lay, nor consequently how to amend it; and yet it was open enough to a judicious eye: רבות rabboth, *sic veteres; et tamen forte legendum*, ראות reoth, vide cap. Isaiah 6:9." - Secker. That is, ראית raith, reoth, seeing, thou shalt see. I believe no one will doubt of admitting this as the true reading.

**But he heareth not "Yet thou wilt not hear"** - For ישמע yishma, read תשמע tishma, in the second person; so all the ancient Versions and forty MSS. of Kennicott's, (four of them ancient), and seventeen of De Rossi's, and perhaps five more. Two others have תשמעו tishmeu, second person plural.

## Verse 21

**He will magnify the law "He hath exalted his own praise"** - For תורה torah, the law, the Septuagint read תודה todah, praise.

## Verse 22

**They are all of them snared in holes "All their chosen youths are taken in the toils"** - For הפך hapheach read הופכו huphachu, in the plural number, hophal; as הובאו hochbau, which answers to it in the following member of the sentence. Le Clerc, Houbigant. הפך huppach, Secker.

## Verse 24

**We have sinned "They have sinned"** - For חטאנו chatanu, "we have sinned," first person; the Septuagint and Chaldee read חטאו chateu, "they have sinned," in the third person.

## Verse 25

**The fury of his anger "The heat of his wrath"** - For חמה chammah, the Bodl. MS. has חממת chammath, in regimine, more regularly.

**It hath set him on fire round about** - So thoroughly hardened are the Jewish people, that they are represented as being in a house on fire, and even scorched with the flames, without perceiving their danger, or feeling that they are hurt! What a picture of mental induration! and this is their state to the present day. But by whom shall Jacob arise? for in this sense he is small indeed. Many efforts have been made to Christianize them, but without effect; and is this to be wondered at, while we tell them how great they are, how learned, how wise, how much we owe to them, that they are still the peculiar people of God, etc., etc.? If all this be true, what can they gain by becoming Christians? Whereas a more stupid, proud, hardened, ignorant people can scarcely be found in the civilized world, and they are most grossly ignorant of their own Scriptures.

## **Chapter 43**

### **43:1-44:5. Assurance for the restored nation**

#### **Introduction**

Prediction of that blessed period when God should gather the posterity of Abraham, with tender care, from their several dispersions in every quarter under heaven, and bring them safely to their own land, Isaiah 43:1-7. Struck with astonishment at so clear a display of an event so very remote, the prophet again challenges all the blended nations and their idols to produce an instance of such foreknowledge, Isaiah 43:8, Isaiah 43:9; and intimates that the Jews should remain (as at this day), a singular monument to witness the truth of the prediction, till it should at length be fulfilled by the irresistible power of God, Isaiah 43:10-13. He then returns to the nearer deliverance - that from the captivity of Babylon, Isaiah 43:14, Isaiah 43:15; with which, however, he immediately connects another deliverance described by allusions to that from Egypt, but represented as much more wonderful than that; a character which will not at all apply to the deliverance from Babylon, and must therefore be understood of the restoration from the mystical Babylon, Isaiah 43:16-18. On this occasion the prophet, with peculiar elegance, and by a very strong poetic figure, represents the tender care of God in comforting and refreshing his people on their way through the desert, to be so great as to make even the wild beasts haunting those parched places so sensible of the blessing of those copious streams then provided by him, as to join their hissing and howling notes with one consent to praise God, Isaiah 43:19-21. This leads to a beautiful contrast of the ingratitude of the Jews, and a vindication of God's dealings with regard to them, Isaiah 43:22-28.

## **43:1-7. Promise of comfort for the remnant**

### **Verse 1**

**I have called thee by thy name** - "קראתי בשמך karathi beshimcha . So all the versions. But it seems from the seventh verse, and from the thing itself, that we should read קראתיך בשמי karathicha bishmi, 'I have called thee by my name;' for this form of speech often occurs - the other never. For Isaiah 45:24, concerning Cyrus, is another matter; but when God calls Jacob Israel, he calls him by the name of God. See Exodus 31:2." - Secker.

### **Verse 3**

**I gave Egypt for thy ransom** - This is commonly supposed to refer to the time of Sennacherib's invasion; who, when he was just ready to fall upon Jerusalem, soon after his entering Judea, was providentially diverted from that design, and turned his arms against the Egyptians, and their allies the Cushean Arabians, with their neighbors the Sabeans, probably joined with them under Tirhakah. See Isaiah 20:1-6; and Isaiah 37:9. Or as there are some reasonable objections to this opinion, perhaps it may mean more generally that God has often saved his people at the expense of other nations, whom he had, as it were in their stead, given up to destruction. Vitranga explains this of Shalmaneser's designs upon the kingdom of Judea after he had destroyed that of Samaria, from which he was diverted by carrying the war against the Egyptians, Cusheans, and Sabeans; but of this I think he has no clear proof in history. It is not to be wondered at that many things of this kind should remain very obscure for the want of the light of history, which in regard to these times is extremely deficient.

"Did not Cyrus overcome these nations? and might they not be given for releasing the Jews? It seems to have been so from Isaiah 45:14." - Secker.

Kimchi refers all this to the deliverance of Jerusalem from the invasion of Sennacherib. Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, had come out to war against the king of Assyria, who was there-upon obliged to raise the siege of Jerusalem. Thus the Ethiopians, Egyptians, and Sabeans were delivered into the hands of the Assyrians as a ransom for Israel. - Kimchi. I cannot help thinking this to be a very rational solution of the text.

### **Verse 7**

**Every one that is called by my name** - All who worship the true God, and are obedient to his laws.



**I have created him** - בראתי berathiv . I have produced him out of nothing.

**For my glory** - Ten MSS., three ancient, and the Syriac and Vulgate, read לכבודי licabodi, without the conjunction ו vau, and.

**I have formed him** - יצרתיו yetsartiv . I have given him that particular form and shape which are best suited to his station in life.

**I have made him** - עשיתיו asithiv . I have adapted him to the accomplishment of my counsels and designs.

### 43:8-13. Purpose of God in the nation

#### Verse 8

**Bring forth the blind people that have eyes "Bring forth the people, blind, although they have eyes"** - I understand this of the Gentiles, as the verse following, not of the Jews. Their natural faculties, if they had made a proper use of them, must have led them to the knowledge of the being and attributes of the one true God; "for his eternal power and Godhead," if well attended to, are clearly seen in his works, ( Romans 1:20;), and would have preserved them from running into the folly and absurdity of worshipping idols. They are here challenged to produce the evidence of the power and foreknowledge of their idol gods; and the Jews are just afterwards, Isaiah 43:10, appealed to as witnesses for God in this cause, therefore these latter cannot here be meant by the people blind with eyes and deaf with ears.

#### Verse 9

**Who among them** - Seven MSS., three ancient, and the first edition, 1486, with the Syriac and Vulgate, read בכח bechem, who among you, the present reading is preferable.

#### Verse 10

**Ye (the Israelites) are my witnesses, and my servant (the prophet) whom I have chosen** - That whatever has been said before concerning Sennacherib has been literally fulfilled. The prophet had predicted it; the Israelites saw it accomplished.

**Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me** - This is a most difficult place. Was there a time when God was not? No! Yet he says, before me. Will there be a time in which God will not exist? No! Yet he says,

after me. Are not all these words to be referred to his creation? Before me, no god created any thing, nor was there any thing pre-existent but myself. And after me, i.e., after my creation, such as now exists, there shall be no other class of beings formed. This mode of interpretation frees the passage from all embarrassment, and the context perfectly agrees with it. The words my servant, in this verse, the Targum understands of the Messiah.

## **Verse 12**

**I have declared, and have saved** - My prophets have always predicted your deliverances before they took place; and I have fulfilled their words to the uttermost.

**43:14-21. God's sovereign power will be demonstrated by crushing the Chaldeans and restoring their captives**

## **Verse 14**

**The Chaldeans, whose cry is on the ships "The Chaldeans exulting in their ships"** - Babylon was very advantageously situated both in respect to commerce, and as a naval power. It was open to the Persian Gulf by the Euphrates, which was navigable by large vessels; and being joined to the Tigris above Babylon by the canal called Naharmalca or the Royal River, supplied the city with the produce of the whole country to the north of it, as far as the Euxine and Caspian seas, Herod. 1:194. Semiramis was the foundress of this part also of the Babylonian greatness. She improved the navigation of the Euphrates, Herod. 1:184; Strabo, lib. xvi.; and is said to have had a fleet of three thousand galleys, Huet, Hist. du Commerce, chap. 11. We are not to wonder that in later times we hear little of the commerce and naval power of Babylon; for, after the taking of the city by Cyrus, the Euphrates was not only rendered less fit for navigation by being on that occasion diverted from its course and left to spread over the whole country; but the Persian monarchs, residing in their own country, to prevent any invasion by sea on that part of their empire, purposely obstructed the navigation of both the rivers by making cataracts in them, Strabo, ib., that is, by raising dams across the channel, and making artificial falls in them, that no vessel of any size or force could possibly come up. Alexander began to restore the navigation of the rivers by demolishing the cataracts upon the Tigris as far up as Seleucia, Arrian, lib. vii., but he did not live to finish his great designs; those upon the Euphrates still continued. Ammianus, 24:1, mentions them as subsisting in his time.

The prophet therefore might very justly speak of the Chaldeans as glorying in their naval power in his time; though afterwards they had no foundation for making any such boast.

### Verse 15

**The Creator** - For בורא bore, "Creator," six MSS. (two ancient) have אלהי Elohey, "God."

### Verse 19

**Behold, I will do a new thing** - At Isaiah 43:16, the prophet had referred to the deliverance from Egypt and the passage through the Red Sea; here he promises that the same power shall be employed in their redemption and return from the Babylonish captivity. This was to be a new prodigy.

### Verse 20

**The beast of the field shall honor me "The wild beast of the field shall glorify me"** - The image is elegant and highly poetical. God will give such an abundant miraculous supply of water to his people traversing the dry desert in their return to their country, that even the wild beasts, the serpents, the ostriches, and other animals that haunt those arid regions, shall be sensible of the blessing, and shall break forth into thanksgiving and praises to him for the unusual refreshment which they receive from his so plentifully watering the sandy wastes of Arabia Deserta, for the benefit of his people passing through them.

**43: 22-28. The nation's chastisement are the result of its ingratitude**

### Verse 22

**But thou hast not called upon me** - The connection is: But thou, Israel, whom I have chosen, whom I have formed for myself to be my witness against the false gods of the nations; even thou hast revolted from me, hast neglected my worship, and hast been perpetually running after strange gods. The emphasis of this and the following parts of the sentence, on which the sense depends, is laid on the words Me, on My Account, etc. The Jews were diligent in performing the external services of religion; in offering prayers, incense, sacrifices, oblations; but their prayers were not offered with faith; and their oblations were made more frequently to their idols than to the God of their fathers. The Hebrew idiom excludes with a general negative, in a comparative sense, one of two objects opposed to one another: thus, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," Hosea 6:6.

"For I spoke not to your fathers, nor commanded them, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices; but this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey my voice," Jeremiah 7:22, Jeremiah 7:23. And the meaning of this place of Isaiah seems to be much the same with that of Amos; who however has explained at large both parts of the comparison, and specified the false service opposed to the true: -

"Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings,

In the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?

Nay, but you have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch,

And Chiun, your images;

The star of your god, which you made to yourselves."

*Amos 5:25, Amos 5:26.*

**But thou hast been weary of me, O Israel "Neither on my account hast thou lahoured, O Israel"** - For יגעת כי ki yagata, the Septuagint and Vulgate read ויגעת veyagata . - Houbigant. The negative is repeated or referred to by the conjunction ו vau, as in many other places. See note on Isaiah 23:4.

### **Verse 25**

**I, even I, am he** - The original is extremely abrupt: אנכי הוא anochi anochi hu, "I, I, He." Is there any mystery in this form? Does it refer to a plurality of persons in the Godhead?

**For mine own sake** - In the pardon of sin God can draw no reason but from his own infinite goodness.

### **Verse 27**

**Thy first father hath sinned** - On this Kimchi speaks well: "How can ye say that ye have not sinned, seeing your first father, Adam, sinned; and man hath sin impressed on him through natural generation?"

## Verse 28

**I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary "Thy princes have profaned my sanctuary"** - Instead of וַיַּחַלְלֵם שָׂרֵי vaachallel sarey, read וַיַּחַלְלֵם שָׂרֵיךְ vayechelelu sareycha . So the Syriac and Septuagint, καὶ ἐμίαναν οἱ ἀρχόντες τὰ ἁγία μου, "the rulers have defiled my holy things." קדשי kodshi, Houbigant. Οἱ ἀρχόντες σου, "thy rulers," MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2 and Marchal.

**To reproaches "To reproach"** - לִגְדוּפָה ligeduphah, in the singular number; so an ancient MS. and the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate. And, alas! what a curse do they still bear, and what reproach do they still suffer! No national crimes have ever equalled those of the Jewish nation, for no nation ever had such privileges to neglect, despise, sin against. When shall this severity of God towards this people have an end? Answ. Whenever, with one heart, they turn to him, and receive the doctrine of the Lord Jesus; and not till then.

## Chapter 44

### Introduction

This chapter, besides promises of redemption, of the effusion of the Spirit, and success of the Gospel, Isaiah 44:1-5, sets forth, in a very sublime manner, the supreme power and foreknowledge, and absolute eternity, of the one true God; and exposes the folly and absurdity of idolatry with admirable force and elegance, Isaiah 44:6-20. And to show that the knowledge of future events belongs only to Jehovah, whom all creation is again called to adore for the deliverance and reconciliation granted to his people, Isaiah 44:21-23, the prophet concludes with setting in a very strong point of view the absolute impotence of every thing considered great and insurmountable in the sight of men, when standing in the way of the Divine counsel; and mentions the future deliverer of the Jewish nation expressly by name, nearly two hundred years before his birth, Isaiah 44:24-28.

**44:1-5. God's saving grace will be manifested in the conversion of the servant nation**

### Verse 2

**Jesurun** - Jeshurun means Israel. This name was given to that people by Moses, Deuteronomy 32:15; Deuteronomy 33:5, Deuteronomy 33:26. The most probable account of it seems to be that in which the Jewish commentators agree; namely, that it is derived from יָשָׁר yashar, and signifies upright. In the same

manner, Israel, as a people, is called משלם meshullam, perfect, Isaiah 42:19, They were taught of God, and abundantly furnished with the means of rectitude and perfection in his service and worship. Grotius thinks that ישרון yeshurun is a diminutive of ישראֵל yishrael, Israel; expressing peculiar fondness and affection; Ἰσραηλιδίου, O little Israel.

#### Verse 4

**They shall spring up as among the grass "They shall spring up as the grass among the waters"** - בבין חציר bebeyn chatsir, "They shall spring up to the midst of, or rather, in among, the grass. "This cannot be right: eleven MSS., and thirteen editions, have כבין kebeyn, or כבן keben . Twenty-four MSS. read it without the י yod, בבן beben, in the son of the grass; and so reads the Chaldee; בבן beben, in the son of the grass.

Twenty-four MSS. of Dr. Kennicott's, thirty-three of De Rossi's, and one of my own, with six editions, have this reading. The Syriac, מביין mibbeyn . The true reading is in all probability כבין kebeyn ; and the word מים mayim, which should have followed it, is lost out of the text: but it is happily supplied by the Septuagint, ὡς ἀνα μέσον ὕδατος, as among the water "In every place where there is water, there is always grass; for water makes every thing grow in the east." Sir John Chardin's note on 1 Kings 17:5. Harmer's Observations 1:64.

#### Verse 5

**Shall call himself "Shall be called"** - Passive, יקרא yikkare ; κληθήσεται, Symmachus.

**Another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord "This shall inscribe his hand to Jehovah"** - Καὶ ἕτερος ἐπιγράψει χειρὶ (χειρά, Ag., Sym.) αὐτοῦ, Τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰμι· "And another shall write upon his hand, I belong to God." - Sept. They seem to have read here, as before, ליהוה אני laihovah ani, I belong to Jehovah. But the repetition of the same phrase without any variation is not elegant. However, they seem to have understood it rightly, as an allusion to the marks, which were made by punctures rendered indelible, by fire or by staining, upon the hand or some other part of the body, signifying the state or character of the person, and to whom he belonged. The slave was marked with the name of his master, the soldier, of his commander; the idolater, with the name or ensign of his god: Στιγματα ἐπιγραφομένα δια τῶν στρατευομένων ἐν ταῖς χερσίν· "Punctural inscriptions made by the soldiers on their hands." Aetius apud Turnebum Advers. Isaiah 24:12. *Victuris in cute punctis milites scripti et matriculis inserti jurare solent.* "The soldiers having indelible inscriptions on

their skin, and inserted in the muster-rolls, are accustomed to make oath." Vigetius, Isaiah 2:6. And the Christians seem to have imitated this practice, by what Procopius says on this place of Isaiah: Το δε ΤΗ ΧΕΙΡΙ, δια το στιζειν ισως πολλους επι καρπων, η βραχιονων, η του σταυρου σημειον, η την Χριστου προσηγοριαν . "Because many marked their wrists, or their arms, with the sign of the cross, or with the name of Christ." See Revelation 20:4; Spencer, De Leg. Hebr. lib. ii., cap. 20.

#### **44:6-28. Israel a witness to the one true God**

##### **Verses 6-8. God's declaration of His sole deity**

###### **Verse 7**

**Let them show unto them "Let them declare unto us"** - For למו lamo, unto them, the Chaldee reads לנו lanu, unto us The Septuagint read לכם lachem, unto you; which is preferable to the reading of the text. But למו lamo, and לנו lanu, are frequently mistaken one for the other, see Isaiah 10:29; Psalm 80:7; Psalm 64:6.

###### **Verse 8**

**Fear ye not** - to - תרהו tirehu never occurs. Perhaps it should be ותירא tireu, fear ye. Two MSS. read תיראו tirehu, and one of mine תהרו taharu .

##### **Verses 9-20. Satire on the sheer folly of idolatry**

###### **Verse 9-10**

**That they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a god "That every one may be ashamed, that he hath formed a god"** - The Bodleian MS., one of the first extant for its antiquity and authority, instead of מי mi, at the beginning of the tenth verse, has כי ki, which greatly clears up the construction of a very obscure passage. Doederlein approves of this reading. The Septuagint likewise closely connect in construction the end of Isaiah 44:9; with the beginning of Isaiah 44:10; and wholly omit the interrogative מי mi, which embarrasses the sentence: Αισχυνθησονται οι πλασσοντες Θεον, και γλυφοντες παντες ανωφελη· "But they shall be confounded that make a god; and they who engrave unprofitable things;" agreeably to the reading of the MS. above mentioned.

###### **Verse 11**

**His fellows** - חבריו chaberaiv : but עבדיו abadaiv, his servants or worshippers, is the reading of one of De Rossi's MSS., and of the Chaldee.



**And the workmen, they are of men "Even the workmen themselves shall blush" -** I do not know that any one has ever yet interpreted these words to any tolerably good sense: והרשים המה מאדם *vecharashim hemmah meadam* . The Vulgate and our translators, have rendered them very fairly, as they are written and pointed in the text: *Fabri enim sunt ex hominibus*. "And the workmen they are of men." Out of which the commentators have not been able to extract any thing worthy of the prophet. I have given another explanation of the place; agreeable enough to the context, if it can be deduced from the words themselves. I presume that אדם *adam*, *rubuit*, may signify *erubuit*, to be red through shame, as well as from any other cause; though I cannot produce any example of it in that particular sense; and the word in the text I would point מאדם *meoddam* ; or if any one should object to the irregularity of the number, I would read מאדםים *meoddamim* . But I rather think that the irregularity of the construction has been the cause of the obscurity, and has given occasion to the mistaken punctuation. The singular is sometimes put for the plural. See Psalm 68:31; and the participle for the future tense, see Isaiah 40:11. -

## Verse 12

**The smith with the tongs, etc. "The smith cutteth off a portion of iron" -** מעצד *meatstsed*, Participium Pihel of עצד *atsad*, to cut; still used in that sense in the Arabic. See Simonis Lex. Hebrews The Septuagint and Syriac take the word in this form: but they render it sharpeneth the iron. See Castell. Lex. in voce.

The sacred writers are generally large and eloquent upon the subject of idolatry; they treat it with great severity, and set forth the absurdity of it in the strongest light. But this passage of Isaiah, Isaiah 44:12-20, far exceeds any thing that ever was written upon the subject, in force of argument, energy of expression, and elegance of composition. One or two of the apocryphal writers have attempted to imitate the prophet, but with very ill success; Wisd. 13:11-19; 15:7, etc.; Baruch 6, NAB (editor's note: some translations treat this as Letter to Jeremiah), especially the latter, who, injudiciously dilating his matter, and introducing a number of minute circumstances, has very much weakened the force and effect of his invective. On the contrary a heathen author, in the ludicrous way, has, in a line or two, given idolatry one of the severest strokes it ever received: -

*Olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum,*

*Cum faber incertus, scamnum faceretne*

*Priapum, Maluit esse Deum. Deus inde ego.*

*Horat. Satyr, lib. 1. sat. viii.*

"Formerly I was the stump of a fig tree, a useless log; when the carpenter, after hesitating whether to make me a god or a stool, at last determined to make me a god. Thus I became a god!"

From the tenth to the seventeenth verse, a most beautiful strain of irony is carried on against idolatry. And we may naturally think that every idolater, who either read or heard it, must have been for ever ashamed of his own devices. - L.

#### **Verse 14**

**He heweth him down "He heweth down"** - For לכרת lichroth, the Septuagint and Vulgate read כרת carath or יכרת yichroth .

#### **Verse 16**

**With part "And with part"** - Twenty-three MSS., the Septuagint, and Vulgate add the conjunction ו vau, and ועל veal .

#### **Verse 17**

**He falleth down unto it** - There were four forms of adoration used among the Hebrews:

1. השתחוה Hishtachavah, The prostration of the whole body.
2. קדד Kadad, The bowing of the head.
3. כרע Cara, The bending of the upper part of the body down to the knees.
4. ברך Barach, Bowing the knee, or kneeling. See on Isaiah 49:23; (note).

#### **Verse 18**

**He hath shut their eyes "Their eyes are closed up"** - The Septuagint, Chaldee, and Vulgate, for טח tach, read טחו tachu . See note on Isaiah 6:10.

#### **Verse 20**

**He feedeth on ashes** - He feedeth on that which affordeth no nourishment; a proverbial expression for using ineffectual means, and bestowing labor to no purpose. In the same sense Hosea says, "Ephraim feedeth on wind." Hosea 12:1.

## **21-23. God's nation Israel is to be a witness against idolatry**

### **Verse 22**

**I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins "I have made thy transgressions vanish away like a cloud, and thy sins like a vapor"** - Longinus admired the sublimity of the sentiment, as well as the harmony of the numbers, in the following sentence of Demosthenes: Τοῦτο το ψηφισμα τον τοτε τη πολει τερισταντα κινδυνον παρελθειν εποιησεν ὡσπερ νεφος . "This decree made the danger then hanging over the city pass away like a cloud." Probably Isaiah alludes here to the smoke rising up from the sin-offering, dispersed speedily by the wind. and rendered invisible. He who offered his sacrifice aright was as sure that the sin for which he offered it was blotted out, as that the smoke of the sacrifice was dispersed by the wind, and was no longer discernible.

## **Verses 24-28. The Lord decrees the restoration of His people through Cyrus**

### **Verse 24**

**By myself** - Thirteen MSS., six ancient, confirm the reading of the Keri, מאתי meittai .

### **Verse 27**

**That saith to the deep, Be dry "Who saith to the deep, Be thou wasted"** - Cyrus took Babylon by laying the bed of the Euphrates dry, and leading his army into the city by night through the empty channel of the river. This remarkable circumstance, in which the event so exactly corresponded with the prophecy, was also noted by Jeremiah, Jeremiah 50:38; Jeremiah 51:36.

"A drought shall be upon her waters,

and they shall be dried up: -

I will lay her sea dry

And I will scorch up her springs."

It is proper here to give some account of the means and method lay which the stratagem of Cyrus was effected.

The Euphrates in the middle of the summer, from the melting of the snows on the mountains of Armenia, like the Nile, overflows the country. In order to diminish the inundation, and to carry off the waters, two canals were made by Nebuchadnezzar a hundred miles above the city; the first on the eastern side called Naharmalca, or the Royal River, by which the Euphrates was let into the Tigris; the other on the western side, called Pallacopas, or Naharaga, (נהר אגם, *nahar agam*, The river of the pool), by which the redundant waters were carried into a vast lake, forty miles square, contrived, not only to lessen the inundation, but for a reservoir, with sluices, to water the barren country on the Arabian side. Cyrus, by turning the whole river into the lake by the Pallacopas, laid the channel, where it ran through the city, almost dry; so that his army entered it, both above and below, by the bed of the river, the water not reaching above the middle of the thigh. By the great quantity of water let into the lake, the sluices and dams were destroyed; and being never repaired afterwards, the waters spread over the whole country below, and reduced it to a morass, in which the river is lost. *Ingens modo et navigabilis, inde tenuis rivus, despectus emoritur; et nusquam manifesto exitit effluit, ut alii omnes, sed deficit.* "And thus a navigable river has been totally lost, it having no exit from this morass. No wonder then that the geographical face of this country is completely changed;" Mela Jeremiah 3:8; Herod. 1:186, 190; Xenophon, *Cyrop.* vii.; Arrian vii.

## Verse 28

**That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd "Who saith to Cyrus, Thou art my shepherd"** - *Pastor meus es*; Vulg. The true reading seems to be רעי אתה *roi attah*; the word אתה *attah*, has probably been dropped out of the text. The same word is lost out of the text, Psalm 119:57. It is supplied in the Septuagint by the word εἶ, thou art.

**Saying to Jerusalem** - For ולומר *velemor*, the Septuagint and Vulgate read האומר *haomer*.

**And to the temple** - ולהיכל *uleheychal*, as לירושלם *lirushalayim*, before; the preposition is necessary, and the Vulgate seems to read so. - Houbigant.

**That saith of Cyrus, He is, or thou art, my shepherd - Saying to Jerusalem, "Thou shalt be built;" and to the Temple, "Thy foundation shall be laid."** - There is a remarkable beauty and propriety in this verse.

1. Cyrus is called God's shepherd. Shepherd was an epithet which Cyrus took to himself; and what he gave to all good kings.

- This Cyrus should say to the temple: "Thy foundation shall be laid." Not - thou shalt be built. The fact is, only the foundation was laid in the days of Cyrus, the Ammonites having prevented the building; nor was it resumed till the second year of Darius, one of his successors. There is often a precision in the expressions of the prophets which is as honorable to truth, as it is unnoticed by careless readers.

## Chapter 45

### 45. Cyrus a type of Messiah (see 44:24-28 above)

#### Introduction

Prophecy concerning Cyrus, the first king of the Persians. Every obstruction shall be removed out of his way, and the treasures taken from his enemies shall be immense, Isaiah 45:1-3, To whom, and on what account, Cyrus was indebted for his wonderful success, Isaiah 45:4-6. The prophet refutes the absurd opinion of the Persians, that there were two supreme beings, an evil and a good one, represented by light and darkness, here declared to be only the operation of the One true God, Isaiah 45:7; and makes a transition to the still greater work of God displayed in the dispensation of the Gospel, Isaiah 45:8. Great impiety of those who call in question the mysterious providence of God towards his children, Isaiah 45:9-12. The remaining part of this chapter, interspersed with strictures on the absurdity of idolatry and some allusions to the dark lying oracles of the heathens, may partly refer to the deliverance begun by Cyrus, but chiefly to the salvation by the Messiah, which, it is declared, shall be of universal extent and everlasting duration, Isaiah 45:13-25.

**Verses 1-6. The Lord promises irresistible conquest to Cyrus as a type of Messiah.**

#### Verse 1

**Loose the loins of kings "ungird the loins of kings"** - See the note on Isaiah 5:27. Xenophon gives the following list of the nations conquered by Cyrus: the Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, both the Phrygians, Lydians, Carians, Phoenicians, Babylonians. He moreover reigned over the Bactrians, Indians, Cilicians, the Sacae Paphlagones, and Idariandyni. - Cyrop., lib. 1 p. 4, Edit. Hutchinson, Quarto. All these kingdoms he acknowledges, in his decree for the restoration of the Jews, to have been given to him by Jehovah, the God of heaven. Ezra 1:2.

**To open before him the two leaved gates, etc. "That I may open before him the valves; and the gates shall not be shut"** - The gates of Babylon within the city leading from the streets to the river, were providentially left open, when Cyrus's forces entered the city in the night through the channel of the river, in the general disorder occasioned by the great feast which was then celebrated; otherwise, says Herodotus, 1:191, the Persians would have been shut up in the bed of the river, and taken as in a net, and all destroyed. And the gates of the palace were opened imprudently by the king's orders, to inquire what was the cause of the tumult without; when the two parties under Gobrias and Gadatas rushed in, got possession of the palace, and slew the king. - Xenoph., Cyrop. 7 p. 528.

## Verse 2

**The crooked places "The mountains"** - For הֶדּוּרִים *hodurim*, crooked places, a word not easily accounted for in this place, the Septuagint read הַרְרִים *hararim*, τὰ ὄρη, the mountains. Two MSS. have הַדָּרִים *hadarim*, without the ו *vau*, which is hardly distinguishable from the reading of the Septuagint. The Divine protection that attended Cyrus, and rendered his expedition against Babylon easy and prosperous is finely expressed by God's going before him, and making the mountains level. The image is highly poetical: -

*At vos, qua veniet, tumidi subsidite montes,*

*Et faciles curvis vallibus este viae.*

*Ovid, Amor. 2:16.*

"Let the lofty mountains fall down,

and make level paths in the crooked valleys."

**The gates of brass "The valves of brass"** - Abydenus, apud, Euseb. Praep. Evang. 9:41, says, that the wall of Babylon had brazen gates. And Herodotus, i, 179. more particularly: "In the wall all round there are a hundred gates, all of brass; and so in like manner are the sides and the lintels." The gates likewise within the city, opening to the river from the several streets, were of brass; as were those also of the temple of Belus. - Herod. i., 180, 181.

## Verse 3

**I will gave thee the treasures of darkness** - Sardes and Babylon, when taken by Cyrus, were the wealthiest cities in the world. Croesus, celebrated beyond all

the kings of that age for his riches, gave up his treasures to Cyrus, with an exact account in writing of the whole, containing the particulars with which each wagon was loaded when they were carried away; and they were delivered to Cyrus at the palace of Babylon. - Xenoph. Cyrop. lib. 7 p. 503, 515, 540.

Pliny gives the following account of the wealth taken by Cyrus in Asia. *Jam Cyrus devicta Asia, pondo 34 millia auri invenerat; praeter vasa aurea, aurumque factum, et in eo folia, ac platanum, vitemque. Qua victoria argenti quingenta millia talentorum reportavit; et craterem Semiramidis, cuius pondus quindecim talents colligebat. Talentum autem Aegyptium pondo lxxx. patere 50 capere Varro tradit.* - Nat. Hist. 33:15. "When Cyrus conquered Asia, he found thirty-four thousand pounds weight of gold, besides golden vessels and articles in gold; and leaves, (folia, perhaps solia, bathing vessels, Hol.), a plane, and vine tree, (of gold.) By which victory he carried away fifteen thousand talents of silver; and the cup of Semiramis, the weight of which was fifteen talents. The Egyptian talent, according to Varro, was eighty pounds." This cup was the crater, or large vessel, out of which they filled the drinking cups at great entertainments. Evidently it could not be a drinking vessel, which, according to what Varro and Pliny say, must have weighed 1, 200 pounds!

The gold and silver estimated by weight in this account, being converted into pounds sterling, amount to one hundred and twenty-six millions two hundred and twenty-four thousand pounds. - Brerewood, De Ponderibus, cap. x.

Treasures of darkness may refer to the custom of burying their jewels and money under the ground in their house floors, fearing robbers.

## **Verses 7-25. The Lord's sovereignty is vindicated against human critics**

### **Verse 7**

**I form the light, and create darkness** - It was the great principle of the Magian religion, which prevailed in Persia in the time of Cyrus, and in which probably he was educated, that there are two supreme, co-eternal, and independent causes always acting in opposition one to the other; one the author of all good, the other of all evil. The good being they called Light; the evil being, Darkness. That when Light had the ascendant, then good and happiness prevailed among men; when Darkness had the superiority, then evil and misery abounded. An opinion that contradicts the clearest evidence of our reason, which plainly leads us to the acknowledgment of one only Supreme Being, infinitely good as well as powerful. With reference to this absurd opinion, held by the person to whom this prophecy is addressed, God, by his prophet, in the most significant terms, asserts his omnipotence and absolute supremacy: -



"I am Jehovah, and none else;

Forming light, and creating darkness,

Making peace, and creating evil:

I Jehovah am the author of all these things."

Declaring that those powers whom the Persians held to be the original authors of good and evil to mankind, representing them by light and darkness, as their proper emblems, are no other than creatures of God, the instruments which he employs in his government of the world, ordained or permitted by him in order to execute his wise and just decrees; and that there is no power, either of good or evil, independent of the one supreme God, infinite in power and in goodness.

There were, however, some among the Persians whose sentiments were more moderate as to this matter; who held the evil principle to be in some measure subordinate to the good; and that the former would at length be wholly subdued by the latter. See Hyde, *De Relig. Vet. Pers.* cap. xxii.

That this opinion prevailed among the Persians as early as the time of Cyrus we may, I think, infer not only from this passage of Isaiah, which has a manifest reference to it, but likewise from a passage in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, where the same doctrine is applied to the human mind. Araspes, a noble young Persian, had fallen in love with the fair captive Panthea, committed to his charge by Cyrus. After all his boasting that he was superior to the assaults of that passion, he yielded so far to it as even to threaten violence if she would not comply with his desires. Awed by the reproof of Cyrus, fearing his displeasure, and having by cool reflection recovered his reason; in his discourse with him on this subject he says: "O Cyrus, I have certainly two souls; alld this piece of philosophy I have learned from that wicked sophist, Love. For if I had but one soul, it would not be at the same time good and evil, it would not at the same time approve of honorable and base actions; and at once desire to do, and refuse to do, the very same things. But it is plain that I am animated by two souls, and when the good soul prevails, I do what is virtuous; and when the evil one prevails, I attempt what is vicious. But now the good soul prevails, having gotten you for her assistant, and has clearly gained the superiority." *Lib. 6 p. 424.*

**I make peace, and create evil** - Evil is here evidently put for war and its attendant miseries. I will procure peace for the Israelites, and destroy Babylon by war. I form light, and create darkness. Now, as darkness is only the privation of light, so the evil of war is the privation of peace.

## Verse 8

**Drop down, ye heavens** - The eighty-fifth psalm is a very elegant ode on the same subject with this part of Isaiah's prophecies, the restoration of Judah from captivity; and is, in the most beautiful part of it, a manifest imitation of this passage of the prophet: -

"Verily his salvation is nigh unto them that fear him,

That glory may dwell in our land.

Mercy and truth have met together;

Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Truth shall spring from the earth,

And righteousness shall look down from heaven.

Even Jehovah: will give that which is good,

And our land shall yield her produce.

Righteousness shall go before him,

And shall direct his footsteps in the way."

*Psalms 85:10-14.*

See the notes on these verses.

These images of the dew and the rain descending from heaven and making the earth fruitful, employed by the prophet, and some of those nearly of the same kind which are used by the psalmist, may perhaps be primarily understood as designed to set forth in a splendid manner the happy state of God's people restored to their country, and flourishing in peace and plenty, in piety and virtue; but justice and salvation, mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, and glory dwelling in the land, cannot with any sort of propriety, in the one or the other, be interpreted as the consequences of that event; they must mean the blessings of the great redemption by Messiah.

**Let the earth open, etc.** - Jonathan, in his Targum, refers this to the resurrection of the dead; the earth shall be opened, ויחון מיתים veyechon meiteiya, and the

dead shall revive. A plain proof that the ancient Jews believed in a future state, and acknowledged the resurrection of the dead.

**Let them bring forth salvation "Let salvation produce her fruit"** - For ויפרו vaiyiphru, the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Syriac read ויפרה vaiyiphrah ; and one MS. has a rasure close after the latter ו vau, which probably was ה he at first.

## Verse 9

**Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker "To unto him that contendeth with the power that formed him"** - The prophet answers or prevents the objections and cavils of the unbelieving Jews, disposed to murmur against God, and to arraign the wisdom and justice of his dispensations in regard to them; in permitting them to be oppressed by their enemies, and in promising them deliverance instead of preventing their captivity. St. Paul has borrowed the image, and has applied it to the like purpose with equal force and elegance: "Nay, but, O man! who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, out of the same lump to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor?" Romans 9:20, Romans 9:21. This is spoken says Kimchi, against the king of Babylon, who insulted the Most High, bringing forth the sacred vessels, drinking out of them, and magnifying himself against God.

**Or thy work, He hath no hands "And to the workman, Thou hast no hands"** - The Syriac renders, as if he had read, ולא היתי פעל ידיך velo hayithi pheal yadeycha, "neither am I the work of thy hands;" the Septuagint, as if they had reads ולא פעלת ואין ודים לך velo phaalta veeyn yaadim lecha, "neither hast thou made me; and thou hast no hands." But the fault seems to be in the transposition of the two pronouns; for ופעלך uphoolcha, read ופעלו uphoolo : and for לו lo, read לך lecha . So Houbigant corrects it; reading also ופעלו uphoolo ; which last correction seems not altogether necessary. The Septuagint, in MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2 have it thus, καὶ τὸ ἐργον οὐκ ἐχεις χεῖρας, which favors the reading here proposed.

## Verse 11

**Ask me of things to come "And he that formeth the things which are to come"** - I read ויוצר veyotser, without the ו vau suffixed; from the Septuagint, who join it in construction with the following word, ὁ ποιησας τα επερχομενα .

"Do ye question me." - תשאלוני tishaluni, Chald. recte; praecedit ת tau ; *et sic forte legerunt reliqui* Intt. - Secker. "The Chaldee has, more properly, תשאלוני

tishaluni, with a ת tau preceding; and thus the other interpreters probably read." The learned bishop therefore reads the passage thus: -

"Thus saith Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel;

And he that formeth the things which are to come;

Do ye question me concerning my children?

And do ye give me directions concerning the work of my hands?"

### Verse 13

**I have raised him up** - This evidently refers to Cyrus, and to what he did for the Jews; and informs us by whom he was excited to do it.

### Verse 14

**The labor of Egypt "The wealth of Egypt"** - This seems to relate to the future admission of the Gentiles into the Church of God. Compare Psalm 68:32; Psalm 72:10; Psalm 60:6-9. And perhaps these particular nations may be named, by a metonymy common in all poetry, for powerful and wealthy nations in general. See note on Isaiah 60:1.

**The Sabeans, men of stature "The Sabeans, tall of stature"** - That the Sabeans were of a more majestic appearance than common, is particularly remarked by Agatharchides, an ancient Greek historian quoted by Bochart, Phaleg, 2:26, τα σωματα εστι των κατοικουντων αξιολογωτερα . So also the Septuagint understand it, rendering it ανδρες υψηλοι, "tall men." And the same phrase, אנשי מדה anshey middah, is used for persons of extraordinary stature, Numbers 13:32, and 1 Chronicles 20:6.

**They shall make supplication unto thee "They shall in suppliant guise address thee"** - The conjunction ו vau is supplied by the ancient Versions, and confirmed by fifteen MSS. of Kennicott's, (seven ancient), thirteen of De Rossi's, and six editions, ואלך veelayich . Three MSS. (two ancient) omit the ו vau before אלך elaych at the beginning of the line.

### Verse 15

**Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself** - At present, from the nations of the world.

**O God of Israel, the Savior** - While thou revealest thyself to the Israelites and savest them.

### Verse 16

**They shall be ashamed "They are ashamed"** - The reader cannot but observe the sudden transition from the solemn adoration of the secret and mysterious nature of God's counsels in regard to his people, to the spirited denunciation of the confusion of idolaters, and the final destruction of idolatry; contrasted with the salvation of Israel, not from temporal captivity, but the eternal salvation by the Messiah, strongly marked by the repetition and augmentation of the phrase, to the ages of eternity. But there is not only a sudden change in the sentiment, the change is equally observable in the construction of the sentences; which from the usual short measure, runs out at once into two distichs of the longer sort of verse. See Prelim. Dissert. p. 66, etc. There is another instance of the same kind and very like to this, of a sudden transition in regard both to the sentiment and construction in Isaiah 42:17.

**"His adversaries"** - This line, to the great diminution of the beauty of the distich, is imperfect in the present text: the subject of the proposition is not particularly expressed, as it is in the line following. The version of the Septuagint happily supplies the word that is lost: οἱ ἀντικείμενοι αὐτῷ, "his adversaries," the original word was צִרְיִי tsaraiv . -

### Verse 18

**He formed it to be inhabited "For he formed it to be inhabited"** - An ancient MS. has כִּי ki before לַשֶּׁבֶת lashebeth ; and so the ancient Versions.

### Verse 19

**I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth** - In opposition to the manner in which the heathen oracles gave their answers, which were generally delivered from some deep and obscure cavern. Such was the seat of the Cumean Sybil: -

*Excisum Euboicae latus ingens rupis in antrum.*

*Virg. Aen. 6:42.*

"A cave cut in the side of a huge rock."

Such was that of the famous oracle at Delphi; of which, says Strabo, lib. ix., φασι δ' εἶναι τὸ μαντεῖον ἀντρον κοῖλον μετὰ βαθύς, οὐ μάλα εὐρυστόμον . "The oracle is said to be a hollow cavern of considerable depth, with an opening not very wide." And Diodorus, giving an account of the origin of this oracle, says "that there was in that place a great chasm or cleft in the earth; in which very place is now situated what is called the Adytum of the temple." Ἀδυτὸν σπηλαιον, ἢ τὸ ἀποκρυφὸν μέρος τοῦ ἱεροῦ . Mesych. "Adytum means a cavern, or the hidden part of the temple."

**I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right "I am Jehovah, who speak truth, who give direct answers"** - This also is said in opposition to the false and ambiguous answers given by the heathen oracles, of which there are many noted examples; none more so than that of the answer given to Croesus when he marched against Cyrus, which piece of history has some connection with this part of Isaiah's prophecies. Let us hear Cicero's account of the Delphic answers in general, and of this in particular: *Sed jam ad te venio,*

*O sancte Apollo, qui umbilicum certum terrarum obsides,*

*Unde superstitiosa primum saeva evasit vox fera.*

*Tuis enim oraculis Chrysippus totum volumen implevit, partim falsis, ut ego opinor; partim casu veris, ut fit in omni oratione saepissime; partim flexiloquis et obscuris, ut interpretes egeant interprete, et sors ipsa ad sortes referenda sit; partim ambiguas, et quae ad dialecticum deferenda sint. Nam cum sors illa edita est opulentissimo regi Asiae, Croesus Halym penetrans magnam pervertet opum vim: hostium vim sese perversurum putavit; pervertit autem suam. Utrum igitur eorum accidisset, verum oraculum fuisset.* De Divinat. 2:56. Mountainous countries, and those which abounded in chasms, caves, and grottos, were the places in which oracles were most frequent. The horror and gloom inspired by such places were useful to the lying priests in their system of deception. The terms in which those oracles were conceived, (they were always ambiguous, or equivocal, or false, or illusory), sometimes the turn of a phrase, or a peculiarity in idiom or construction which might be turned pro or con, contained the essence of the oracular declaration. Sometimes, in the multitude of guesses, one turned out to be true; at other times, so equivocal was the oracle, that, however the thing fell out, the declaration could be interpreted in that way, as in the above to Croesus, from the oracle at Delphi, which was: If Croesus march against Cyrus, he shall overthrow a great empire: he, supposing that this promised him success, fought, and lost his own, while he expected to destroy that of his enemy. Here the quack demon took refuge in his designed ambiguity.

He predicted the destruction of a great empire, but did not say which it was; and therefore he was safe, howsoever the case fell out. Not one of the predictions of God's prophets is conceived in this way.

### Verse 21

**Bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together** - For יועצו yoatsu or yivvaatsu, let them consult, the Septuagint read ידעו yedau, let them know. but an ancient MS. has יועדו yoedu, let them come together by appointment; which may probably be the true reading.

### Verse 22

**Look unto me, and be ye saved, etc.** - This verse and the following contain a plain prediction of the universal spread of the knowledge of God through Christ; and so the Targum appears to have understood it; see Romans 14:11; Philemon 2:10. The reading of the Targum is remarkable, viz., פנואת למימרי ithpeno lemeymri, look to my Word, ὁ Λογος, the Lord Jesus.

### Verse 23

**I have sworn by myself** - במימרי bemeymri, by my Word: and the word - פתגם pithgam, or saying, to distinguish it from the personal substantial Word meymra, mentioned before. See the Targum.

**The word is gone out of my mouth "Truth is gone forth from my mouth; the word"** - So the Septuagint distinguish the members of the sentence, preserving the elegance of the construction and the clearness of the sense.

### Verse 24

**Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength "Saying, Only to Jehovah belongeth salvation and power"** - A MS. omits לי li, unto me; and instead of לי אמר li amar, he said or shall say unto me, the Septuagint read, in the copy which they used, לאמר lemor, saying. For יבא yabo, He shall come, in the singular, twelve MSS. three ancient) read יבאו yabeu, plural; and a letter is erased at the end of the word in two others: and so the Alexandrine copy of the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read it. For צדקות tsedakoth plural, two MSS. read צדקת tsidkath, singular; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee.

Probably these are the words of Cyrus, who acknowledged that all his success came from Jehovah. And this sentiment is in effect contained in his decree or



proclamation, Ezra 1:2 : "Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, "etc.

## Chapter 46

### 46-47. Deliverance from Babylon and its lessons

#### Introduction

The idols of Babylon represented as so far from being able to bear the burden of their votaries, that they themselves are borne by beasts of burden into captivity, Isaiah 46:1, Isaiah 46:2. This beautifully contrasted with the tender care of God, in bearing his people from first to last in his arms, and delivering them from their distress, Isaiah 46:3, Isaiah 46:4. The prophet, then, with his usual force and elegance, goes on to show the folly of idolatry, and the utter inability of idols, Isaiah 46:5-7. From which he passes with great ease to the contemplation of the attributes and perfections of the true God, Isaiah 46:8-10. Particularly that prescience which foretold the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, with all its leading circumstances; and also that very remote event of which it is the type in the days of the Messiah, Isaiah 46:11-13.

#### 46:1-13. The helplessness of idols in contrast to the Lord's omnipotence

##### Verse 1

**Their carriages were heavy laden "Their burdens are heavy"** - For נשאתיכם nesuotheychem, your burdens, the Septuagint had in their copy נשאתיהם nesuotheyhem, their burdens.

##### Verse 2

**They could not deliver the burden "They could not deliver their own charge"** - That is, their worshippers, who ought to have been borne by them. See the two next verses. The Chaldee and Syriac Versions render it in effect to the same purpose, those that bear them, meaning their worshippers; but how they can render מִשָּׂא massa in an active sense, I do not understand.

For לוֹ lo, not, וְלוֹ velo, and they could not, is the reading of twenty-four of Kennicott's, sixteen of De Rossi's, and two of my own MSS. The added וּ vau gives more elegance to the passage.

**But themselves "Even they themselves"** - For וְנַפְשָׁם venaphsham, an ancient MS. has כִּי נַפְשָׁם ki naphsham, with more force.

### Verse 3

**Which are borne by me from the belly "Ye that have been borne by me from the birth"** - The prophet very ingeniously, and with great force, contrasts the power of God, and his tender goodness effectually exerted towards his people, with the inability of the false gods of the heathen. He like an indulgent father had carried his people in his arms, "as a man carrieth his son," Deuteronomy 1:31. He had protected them, and delivered them from their distresses: whereas the idols of the heathen are forced to be carried about themselves and removed from place to place, with great labor and fatigue, by their worshippers; nor can they answer, or deliver their votaries, when they cry unto them.

Moses, expostulating with God on the weight of the charge laid upon him as leader of his people, expresses that charge under the same image of a parent's carrying his children, in very strong terms: "Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them? that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers;" Numbers 11:12.

### Verse 7

**They bear him upon the shoulder - and set him in his place** - This is the way in which the Hindoos carry their gods; and indeed so exact a picture is this of the idolatrous procession of this people, that the prophet might almost be supposed to have been sitting among the Hindoos when he delivered this prophecy. - Ward's Customs.

Pindar has treated with a just and very elegant ridicule the work of the statuary even in comparison with his own poetry, from this circumstance of its being fixed to a certain station. "The friends of Pytheas," says the Scholiast, "came to the poet, desiring him to write an ode on his victory. Pindar demanded three drachms, (minae, I suppose it should be), for the ode. No, say they, we can have a brazen statue for that money, which will be better than a poem. However, changing their minds afterwards, they came and offered him what he had demanded." This gave him the hint of the following ingenious esordium of his ode: -

Οὐκ ἀνδριαντοποιός εἰμι '

Ὡς τ' ἐλινύσσοντα μ' ἐργάζε - σθαι ἀγαλματ' ἐπ' αὐτὰς βαθμιδοςπ

Ἔσταοτ Ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πασαςπ

Ὀλκαδος εν τ ' ακατω γλυκει ' αοιδαπ

Στειχ ' απ ' Αιγινας διαγγελ -

Iois' ὅτι Λαμπωνος υἱοςπ

Πυθεας ευρυσθενηςπ

Νικη Νεμειοις παγκρατιου στεφανον.

*Nem. v.*

Thus elegantly translated by Mr. Francis in a note to Hor. Carm. 4:2. 19.

"It is not mine with forming hand

To bid a lifeless image stand

For ever on its base:

But fly, my verses, and proclaim

To distant realms, with deathless fame,

That Pytheas conquered in the rapid race."

Jeremiah, Jeremiah 10:3-5, seems to be indebted to Isaiah for most of the following passage: -

"The practices of the people are altogether vanity:

For they cut down a tree from the forest;

The work of the artificer's hand with the axe;

With silver and with gold it is adorned;

With nails and with hammers it is fastened, that it may not totter.

Like the palm-tree they stand stiff, and cannot speak;

They are carried about, for they cannot go:

Fear them not, for they cannot do harm;

Neither is it in them to do good."

#### Verse 8

**Show yourselves men** - התאששו hithoshashu . This word is rather of doubtful derivation and signification. It occurs only in this place: and some of the ancient interpreters seem to have had something different in their copies. The Vulgate read התבששו hithbosheshu, take shame to yourselves; the Syriac התבוננו hithbonenu, consider with yourselves; the Septuagint στεναξετε perhaps התאבלו hithabbelu, groan or mourn, within yourselves. Several MSS. read התאוששו hithosheshu, but without any help to the sense.

#### Verse 11

**Calling a ravenous bird from the east "Calling from the east the eagle"** - A very proper emblem for Cyrus, as in other respects, so particularly because the ensign of Cyrus was a golden eagle, ΑΙΤΟΣ χρυσευς, the very word עיט ayit, which the prophet uses here, expressed as near as may be in Greek letters. Xenoph. Cyrop. lib. 7 sub. init. Kimchi says his father understood this, not of Cyrus, but of the Messiah.

**From a far country "From a land far distant"** - Two MSS. add the conjunction ו vau, ומארץ umeerets ; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

#### Verse 12

**Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted** - This is an address to the Babylonians, stubbornly bent on the practice of injustice towards the Israelites.

## Chapter 47

### Introduction

The destruction of Babylon is denounced by a beautiful selection of circumstances, in which her prosperous is contrasted with her adverse condition. She is represented as a tender and delicate female reduced to the work and abject condition of a slave, and bereaved of every consolation, Isaiah 47:1-4. And that on account of her cruelty, particularly to God's people, her pride, voluptuousness, sorceries, and incantations, Isaiah 47:5-11. The folly of these last practices elegantly exposed by the prophet, Isaiah 47:12-15. It is worthy of observation that almost all the imagery of this chapter is applied in the book of the Revelation, (in nearly the same words), to the antitype of the illustrious capital of the Chaldean empire, viz., Babylon the Great.

**47:1-7. Chastisement beyond that which God ordains punishable by enslavement in Babylon's case**

**Verse 1**

**Come down, and set in the dust "Descend, and sit on the dust"** - See note on Isaiah 3:26, and on Isaiah 52:2; (note).

**Verse 2**

**Take the millstones, and grind meal "Take the mill, and grind corn"** - It was the work of slaves to grind the corn. They used hand-mills: water-mills were not invented till a little before the time of Augustus, (see the Greek epigram of Antipater, which seems to celebrate it as a new invention, Anthol. Cephalae, 653); wind-mills, not until long after. It was not only the work of slaves, but the hardest work; and often inflicted upon them as a severe punishment: -

*Molendum in pistrino; vapulandum; habendae compedes.*

*Terent. Phorm. 2:1. 19.*

*Hominem pistrino dignum.*

*Id. Heaut. 3:2. 19.*

To grind in the mill, to be scourged, to be put in the stocks, were punishments for slaves. Hence a delinquent was said to be a man worthy of the mill. The tread-mill, now in use in England, is a revival of this ancient usage. But in the east grinding was the work of the female slaves. See Exodus 11:5; Exodus 12:29, (in the version of the Septuagint;) Matthew 24:41; Homer, Odyss. 20:105-108. And it is the same to this day. "Women alone are employed to grind their corn;" Shaw's Algiers and Tunis, p. 287. "They are the female slaves, that are generally employed in the east at those hand-mills for grinding corn; it is extremely laborious, and esteemed the lowest employment in the house;" Sir J. Chardin, Harmer's Observ. i., p. 153. The words denote that state of captivity to which the Babylonians should be reduced.

**Make bare the leg, uncover the thigh** - This is repeatedly seen in Bengal, where there are few bridges, and both sexes, having neither shoes nor stockings, truss up their loose garments, and walk across, where the waters are not deep. In the deeper water they are obliged to truss very high, to which there seems a reference in the third verse: Thy nakedness shall be uncovered.

### Verse 3

**I will not meet thee as a man "Neither will I suffer man to intercede with me"** - The verb should be pointed, or written, אפגיע aphgia, in Hiphil.

### Verse 4

**Our Redeemer "Our Avenger"** - Here a chorus breaks in upon the midst of the subject, with a change of construction, as well as sentiment, from the longer to the shorter kind of verse, for one distich only; after which the former subject and style are resumed. See note on Isaiah 45:16; (note).

### Verse 6

**I was wroth with my people** - God, in the course of his providence, makes use of great conquerors and tyrants as his instruments to execute his judgments in the earth; he employs one wicked nation to scourge another. The inflicter of the punishment may perhaps be as culpable as the sufferer; and may add to his guilt by indulging his cruelty in executing God's justice. When he has fulfilled the work to which the Divine vengeance has ordained him, he will become himself the object of it; see Isaiah 10:5-12. God charges the Babylonians, though employed by himself to chastise his people, with cruelty in regard to them. They exceeded the bounds of justice and humanity in oppressing and destroying them; and though they were really executing the righteous decree of God, yet, as far as it regarded themselves, they were only indulging their own ambition and violence. The Prophet Zechariah sets this matter in the same light: "I was but a little angry and they helped forward the affliction;" Isaiah 1:15. -

### Verse 7

**So that thou didst not "Because thou didst not"** - For עד ad, read על al ; so two MSS., and one edition. And for, אחריתה acharithah, "the latter end of it," read אחריתך acharithecha, "thy latter end;" so thirteen MSS., and two editions, and the Vulgate. Both the sixth and seventh verses are wanting in one of my oldest MSS.

**Verses 8-15. The godless culture, philosophy, and religion of this world are dommed**

### Verse 9

**These two things shall come to thee in a moment** - That is, suddenly. Belshazzar was slain; thus the city became metaphorically a widow, the husband

- the governor of it, being slain. In the time in which the king was slain, the Medes and Persians took the city, and slew many of its inhabitants, see Daniel 5:30, Daniel 5:31. When Darius took the city, he is said to have crucified three thousand of its principal inhabitants.

**In their perfection "On a sudden"** - Instead of בתמם bethummam, "in their perfection," as our translation renders it, the Septuagint and Syriac read, in the copies from which they translated, פתאם pithom, suddenly; parallel to רגע rega, in a moment, in the preceding alternate member of the sentence. The concurrent testimony of the Septuagint and Syriac, favored by the context, may be safely opposed to the authority of the present text.

**For the multitude "Notwithstanding the multitude"** - ברב berob . For this sense of the particle ב beth, see Numbers 14:11.

### Verse 11

**Thou shalt not know from whence it riseth "Thou shalt not know how to deprecate"** - שחרה shachrah ; so the Chaldee renders it, which is approved by Jarchi on the place; and Michaelis Epim. in Praelect. xix.; see Psalm 78:34.

*Videtur in fine hujus commatis deesse verbum, ut hoc membrum prioribus respondeat.* "A word appears to be wanting at the end of this clause to connect it properly with the two preceding." - Secker.

In order to set in a proper light this judicious remark, it is necessary to give the reader an exact verbal translation of the whole verse: -

"And evil shall come upon thee, thou shalt not know how to deprecate it;

And mischief shall fall upon thee, thou shalt not be able to expiate it;

And destruction shall come suddenly upon thee, thou shalt not know" -

What? how to escape, to avoid it, to be delivered from it? perhaps צאת ממנה tseth mimmennah, "they could not go out from it, " Jeremiah 11:11. I am persuaded that a phrase is here lost out of the text. But as the ancient versions retain no traces of it, and a wide field lies open to uncertain conjecture, I have not attempted to fill up the chasm, but have in the translation, as others have done before me, palliated and disguised the defect, which I cannot with any assurance pretend to supply.



## Verse 13

**From these things "What are the events"** - For מאשר measher, read מה אשר mah asher, so the Septuagint, "what is to happen to thee."

## Verse 15

**To his quarter "To his own business"** - לעברו leebro . Expositors give no very good account of this word in this place. In a MS. it was at first לעבדו leabdo, to his servant or work, which is probably the true reading. The sense however is pretty much the same with the common interpretation: "Every one shall turn aside to his own business; none shall deliver thee."

## Chapter 48

### 48. The Lord's dealing with disobedient Israel

#### Introduction

The Jews reproved for their obstinate attachment to idols, notwithstanding their experience of the Divine providence over them; and of the Divine prescience that revealed by the prophets the most remarkable events which concerned them, that they should not have the least pretext for ascribing any portion of their success to their idols, Isaiah 48:1-8. The Almighty, after bringing them to the furnace for their perverseness, asserts his glorious sovereignty, and repeats his gracious promises of deliverance and consolation, Isaiah 48:9-11. Prophecy concerning that individual (Cyrus) who shall be an instrument in the hand of God of executing his will on Babylon, and his power on the Chaldeans; and the idols of the people are again challenged to give a like proof of their foreknowledge, Isaiah 48:12-16. Tender and passionate exclamation of Jehovah respecting the hardened condition of the Jewish nation, to which the very pathetic exclamation of the Divine Savior when he wept over Jerusalem may be considered a striking parallel, Isaiah 48:17-19. Notwithstanding the repeated provocations of the house of Israel, Jehovah will again be merciful to them. They are commanded to escape from Babylon; and God's gracious favor towards them is beautifully represented by images borrowed from the exodus from Egypt, Isaiah 48:20, Isaiah 48:21. Certain perdition of the finally impenitent, Isaiah 48:22. It will be proper here to remark that many passages in this chapter, and indeed the general strain of these prophecies, have a plain aspect to a restoration of the Church in the latter days upon a scale much greater than the world has yet witnessed, when the very violent fall of Babylon the Great, mentioned in the Revelation, of which the Chaldean capital was an expressive type, shall introduce by a most tremendous political convulsion, ( Revelation

16:17-21;), that glorious epoch of the Gospel, which forms so conspicuous a part of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and has been a subject of the prayers of all saints in all ages.

### **Verses 1-8. The Lord presents evidence of fulfilled prophecy**

#### **Verse 1**

**Are come forth out of the waters of Judah "Ye that flow from the fountain of Judah"** - מִמֵּי mimmey, "from the waters." Perhaps מִמֵּעַי mimmeey, "from the bowels," So many others have conjectured, or מִנִּי יְהוּדָה meni yehudah, or מִיְּהוּדָה meyjudah, "from Judah." - Secker. But see Michaelis in Praelect, not. 22. And we have עֵיִן יַעֲקֹב eyn yaakob, "the fountain of Jacob," Deuteronomy 33:28, and מִמֵּקוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל mimmekor yishrael, "from the fountain of Israel," Psalm 68:27. Twenty-seven MSS. of Kennicott's, six of De Rossi's and two of my own, with six editions, have מֵימַי meymey, "from the days;" which makes no good sense.

#### **Verse 6**

**Thou hast heard, see all this "Thou didst hear it beforehand; behold, the whole is accomplished"** - For חָזַק chazeh, see, a MS. has חָזַק hazzeh, this; thou hast heard the whole of this: the Syriac has וְחָזִית vechazith, "thou hast heard, and thou hast seen, the whole." Perhaps it should be הִנֵּה hinneh, behold. In order to express the full sense, I have rendered it somewhat paraphrastically.

### **Verses 9-11. God upholds His glory by means of Israel's chastening**

#### **Verse 9**

**And for my praise "And for the sake of my praise"** - I read וְלִמְעַן תְּהִלָּתִי ulemaan tehillathi . The word לִמְעַן lemaan, though not absolutely necessary here, for it may be understood as supplied from the preceding member, yet seems to have been removed from hence to Isaiah 48:11; where it is redundant, and where it is not repeated in the Septuagint, Syriac, and a MS. I have therefore omitted it in the latter place, and added it here.

#### **Verse 10**

**I have chosen thee "I have tried thee"** - For בְּחַרְתִּיךָ becharticha, "I have chosen thee," a MS. has בְּחַנְתִּיךָ bechanticha, "I have tried thee." And so perhaps read the Syriac and Chaldee interpreters; they retain the same word בְּחַרְתִּיךָ bechartach ; but in those languages it signifies, I have tried thee. כֶּסֶף kecheseph, quasi argentum, "as silver." Vulgate.

I cannot think בכסף becheseph, With silver, is the true reading. ככסף kecheseph, Like silver, as the Vulgate evidently read it, I suppose to have been the original reading, though no MS. yet found supports this word; the similarity of the two letters, ב beth and כ caph, might have easily led to the mistake in the first instance; and it has been but too faithfully copied ever since. כור cur, which we translate furnace, should be rendered crucible, the vessel in which the silver is melted. The meaning of the verse seems to be this: I have purified you, but not as silver is purified; for when it is purified, no dross of any kind is left behind. Had I done this with you, I should have consumed you altogether; but I have put you in the crucible of affliction, in captivity, that you may acknowledge your sins, and turn unto me.

### Verse 11

**For how should my name be polluted "For how would my name be blasphemed"** - The word שמי shemi, my name, is dropped out of the text; it is supplied by a MS. which has שמי shemi ; and by the Septuagint, ὅτι το ἐμὸν ὄνομα βεβηλοῦται . The Syriac and Vulgate get over the difficulty, by making the verb in the first person; that I may not be blasphemed.

**Verses 12-16. He will raise up a Gentile deliverer to liberate His people from Babylon.**

### Verse 12

**O Jacob "O Jacob, my servant"** - After יעקב yaakob, a MS. of Kennicott's, two of De Rossi's, and the two old editions of 1486 and 1488, add the word עבדי abdi, "my servant," which is lost out of the present text; and there is a rasure in its place in another ancient MS. The Jerusalem Talmud has the same word.

**I also am the last "I am the last"** - For אף אני aph ani, "even I," two ancient MSS. and the ancient Versions, read ואני veani, "and I;" more properly.

### Verse 14

**Which among them hath declared these things "Who among you hath predicted these things"** - For בהם bahem, "among them," twenty-one MSS., nine ancient, and two editions, one of them that of the year 1488, fourteen of De Rossi's, and one ancient of my own, have בכם bachem, "among you;" and so the Syriac.

**The Lord hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon "He, whom Jehovah hath loved, will execute his will on Babylon"** - That is, Cyrus; so

Symmachus has well rendered it: Ὁν ὁ Κύριος ἠγάπησε ποιήσει το θέλημα αὐτοῦ, "He whom the Lord hath loved will perform his will."

**On the Chaldeans** - The preposition is lost; it is supplied in the edition of 1486, which has בכשדים bechadim, and so the Chaldee and Vulgate.

### **Verses 17-19. He laments the tragedy of their disobedience**

#### **Verse 16**

**Come ye near unto me** - After the word קרבו kirbu, "draw near," a MS. adds גוים goyim, "O ye nations;" which, as this and the two preceding verses are plainly addressed to the idolatrous nations, reproaching their gods as unable to predict future events, is probably genuine.

**Hear ye this "And hear ye this"** - A MS. adds the conjunction, ושמעו vashimu ; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

**I have not spoken in secret** - The Alexandrine copy of the Septuagint adds here, οὐδε ἐν τοπῷ γῆς σκοτεινῷ, "nor in a dark place of the earth," as in Isaiah 45:19. That it stands rightly, or at least stood very early, in this place of the Version of the Septuagint, is highly probable, because it is acknowledged by the Arabic Version, and by the Coptic MS. St. Germain de Prez, Paris, translated likewise from the Septuagint. But whether it should be inserted, as of right belonging to the Hebrew text, may be doubted; for a transcriber of the Greek Version might easily add it by memory from the parallel place; and it is not necessary to the sense.

**From the time that it was "Before the time when it began to exist"** - An ancient MS. has היותם heyotham, "they began to exist;" and so another had it at first. From the time that the expedition of Cyrus was planned, there was God managing the whole by the economy of his providence.

**There am I "I had decreed it"** - I take שם sham for a verb, not an adverb.

**And now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me "And now the Lord Jehovah hath sent me, and his Spirit"** -

Τις ἐστὶν ὁ ἐν τῷ Ησαιοῦ λεγὼν, Καὶ νῦν Κύριος ἀπεστείλε με καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ; ἐν ᾧ, ἀμφιβολοῦ ὄντος τοῦ ῥήτου, ποτερον ὁ Πατήρ καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα ἀπεστείλαν τοῦ Ἰησοῦν, ἢ ὁ Πατήρ ἀπεστείλε τὸν τε Χριστὸν καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα τὸ δευτερον ἐστὶν ἀληθές .

"Who is it that saith in Isaiah, And now the Lord hath sent me and his Spirit? in which, as the expression is ambiguous, is it the Father and the Holy Spirit who have sent Jesus; or the Father, who hath sent both Christ and the Holy Spirit. The latter is the true interpretation." - Origen cont. Cels. lib. 1.

I have kept to the order of the words of the original, on purpose that the ambiguity, which Origen remarks in the Version of the Septuagint, and which is the same in the Hebrew might still remain; and the sense which he gives to it, be offered to the reader's judgment, which is wholly excluded in our translation.

### **Verse 18**

**As a river "Like the river"** - That is, the Euphrates.

### **Verse 19**

**Like the gravel thereof "Like that of the bowels thereof"** - מַעֵי הַיָּם וְהֵם הַדָּגִים - betseetsaey meey haiyam vehem haddagim ; "As the issue of the bowels of the sea; that is, fishes." - Salom. ben Melec. And so likewise Aben Ezra, Jarchi Kimchi, etc.

**His name "Thy name"** - For שְׁמוֹ shemo, "his name," the Septuagint had in the copy from which they translated שִׁמְךָ shimcha, "thy name."

**Verses 20-22. They are to advertise His redemption from Babylon**

### **Verse 20**

**Tell this "Make it heard"** - Twenty-seven MSS. of Kennicott's, (ten ancient), many of De Rossi's, and two ancient, of my own, with the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and Arabic, and one edition, prefix to the verb the conjunction וְ vau, וְהַשְׁמִיעוּ vehashmiu .

### **Verse 21**

**They thirsted not - through the deserts** - Kimchi has a surprising observation upon this place: "If the prophecy," says he, "relates to the return from the Babylonish captivity, as it seems to do, it is to be wondered how it comes to pass, that in the Book of Ezra, in which he gives an account of their return, no mention is made that such miracles were wrought for them; as, for instance, that God clave the rock for them in the desert." It is really much to be wondered, that one of the most learned and judicious of the Jewish expositors of the Old Testament, having advanced so far in a large Comment on Isaiah, should appear

to be totally ignorant of the prophet's manner of writing; of the parabolic style, which prevails in the writings of all the prophets, and more particularly in the prophecy of Isaiah, which abounds throughout in parabolical images from the beginning to the end; from "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth," to "the worm and the fire" in the last verse. And how came he to keep his wonderment to himself so long? Why did he not expect that the historian should have related how, as they passed through the desert, cedars, pines, and olive-trees shot up at once on the side of the way to shade them; and that instead of briers and brambles the acacia and the myrtle sprung up under their feet, according to God's promises, Isaiah 41:19; and Isaiah 55:13;? These and a multitude of the like parabolical or poetical images, were never intended to be understood literally. All that the prophet designed in this place, and which he has executed in the most elegant manner, was an amplification and illustration of the gracious care and protection of God vouchsafed to his people in their return from Babylon, by an allusion to the miraculous exodus from Egypt. See De S. Poesi, Hebr. Prael. ix.

## **Verse 22**

**There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked** - See below, note on Isaiah 57:21; (note). As the destruction of Babylon was determined, God commands his people to hasten out of it; for, saith the Lord, there is no peace (prosperity) to the wicked; *οὐκ ἐστὶ χαίρειν τοῖς ἀσεβέσιν, λέγει Κύριος* . - Sept. "There is no rejoicing or prosperity to the wicked saith the Lord." Their is not pese to unrytous men seith the Lord. - Old MS. Bible.

## **Chapter 49**

### **49. The Messiah-Servant and His Mission**

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter the Messiah is introduced, declaring the full extent of his commission, which is not only to be Savior to the Jews, but also to the Gentiles. The power and efficacy of his word is reprehended by apt images; the ill success of his ministry among the Jews is intimated, and the great success of the Gospel among the Gentiles, Isaiah 49:1-12. But the prophet, then casting his eye on the happy, though distant, period of Israel's restoration, makes a beautiful apostrophe to the whole creation to shout forth the praises of God on the prospect of this remarkable favor, Isaiah 49:13. The tender mercies of God to his people, with the prosperity of the Church in general, and the final overthrow of all its enemies, make the subject of the remaining verses, Isaiah 49:14-26.



## Verses 1-4. The Servant's arresting exclamation

### Verse 1

**Listen, O isles, unto me "Hearken unto me, O ye distant lands"** - Hitherto the subject of the prophecy has been chiefly confined to the redemption from the captivity of Babylon; with strong intimations of a more important deliverance sometimes thrown in, to the refutation of idolatry, and the demonstration of the infinite power, wisdom, and foreknowledge of God. The character and office of the Messiah was exhibited in general terms at the beginning of chap. 42.; but here he is introduced in person, declaring the full extent of his commission, which is not only to restore the Israelites, and reconcile them to their Lord and Father, from whom they had so often revolted, but to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, to call them to the knowledge and obedience of the true God, and to bring them to be one Church together with the Israelites, and to partake with them of the same common salvation procured for all by the great Redeemer and Reconciler of man to God.

### Verse 2

**And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword "And he hath made my mouth a sharp sword"** - The servant of God, who speaks in the former part of this chapter, must be the Messiah. If any part of this character can in any sense belong to the prophet, yet in some parts it must belong exclusively to Christ; and in all parts to him in a much fuller and more proper sense. Isaiah's mission was to the Jews, not to the distant nations, to whom the speaker in this place addresses himself. "He hath made my mouth a sharp sword;" "to reprove the wicked, and to denounce unto them punishment," says Jarchi, understanding it of Isaiah. But how much better does it suit him who is represented as having "a sharp two-edged sword going out of his mouth," Revelation 1:16; who is himself the Word of God; which word is "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart;" Hebrews 4:12. This mighty Agent and Instrument of God, "long laid up in store with him, and sealed up among his treasures," is at last revealed and produced by his power, and under his protection, to execute his great and holy purposes. He is compared to a polished shaft stored in his quiver for use in his due time. The polished shaft denotes the same efficacious word which is before represented by the sharp sword. The doctrine of the Gospel pierced the hearts of its hearers, "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." The metaphor of the sword and the arrow, applied to powerful speech, is bold, yet just. It has been employed by the most ingenious heathen writers, if with



equal elegance, not with equal force. It is said of Pericles by Aristophanes, (see Cicero, Epist. ad Atticum, 12:6): -

Οὕτως εκηλει, και μονος των ῥητορων-144 Το κεντρον εγκατελειπε τοις ακρωμενοις.

*Apud. Diod. lib. xii.*

His powerful speech

Pierced the hearer's soul, and left behind

Deep in his bosom its keen point infixed.

Pindar is particularly fond of this metaphor, and frequently applies it to his own poetry: -

Επεχε νυν σκοπω τοξον,-144 Αγε, θυμε. τινα βαλλομεν Εκ μαλθακας αυτε φρε  
- νος ευκλεας οϊστους Ίεντες - ;

*Olymp. 2:160.*

"Come on! thy brightest shafts prepare,

And bend, O Muse, thy sounding bow;

Say, through what paths of liquid air

Our arrows shall we throw?"

*West.*

See also ver. 149 of the same ode, and Olymp. Hebrews 9:17, on the former of which places the Scholiast says, τροπικος ὁ λογος· βελη δε τους λογους εορηκε, δια το οξυ και καιριον των εγκωμιων . "He calls his verses shafts, by a metaphor, signifying the acuteness and the apposite application of his panegyric."

This person, who is ( Isaiah 49:3;) called Israel, cannot in any sense be Isaiah. That name, in its original design and full import, can only belong to him who contended powerfully with God in behalf of mankind, and prevailed, Genesis 32:28. After all that Vitringa, Bp. Lowth, and others have said in proof of this chapter speaking of the Messiah, and of him alone, I have my doubts whether sometimes Isaiah, sometimes Cyrus, and sometimes the Messiah, be not

intended; the former shadowing out the latter, of whom, in certain respects, they may be considered the types. The literal sense should be sought out first; this is of the utmost importance both in reading and interpreting the oracles of God.

### **Verses 5-13. The Lord's assurance of the unqualified success of His Servant**

#### **Verse 5**

**And now, saith the Lord "And now, thus saith Jehovah"** - The word כֹּה coh, before אָמַר amar, is dropped out of the text: it is supplied by eight MSS. (two ancient) of Dr. Kennicott's, two of De Rossi's, and the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

**Though Israel be not gathered "And that Israel unto him might be gathered"** - Five MSS. (two ancient) confirm the Keri, or marginal correction of the Masoretes, לוּ lo, unto him, instead of לֹא lo, not, in the text; and so read Aquila; and the Chaldee, Septuagint, and Arabic omit the negative. But the Septuagint, MSS. Pachom, and 1. D. 2 express also the Keri לוּ lo by πρὸς αὐτόν, to him.

#### **Verse 6**

**And to restore the preserved of Irsrae "And to restore the branches of Israel"** - נְצִירֵי netsirey, or נְצוּרֵי netsurey, as the Masoretes correct it in the marginal reading. This word has been matter of great doubt with interpreters: the Syriac renders it the branch, taking it for the same with נֶצֶר netser, Isaiah 11:1. See Michaelis Epim. in Praelect. xix.

#### **Verse 7**

**The Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One "The Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One"** - "Perhaps we should read לִקְדוֹשׁוֹ likdosho," Secker: that is, to his Holy One. The preceding word ends with a ל lamed, which might occasion that letter's being lost here. The Talmud of Babylon has וְקְדוֹשׁוֹ ukedosho, and his Holy One.

**To him whom man despiseth "To him whose person is despised"** - "Perhaps we should read נִבְזָה nibzeh," Secker; or בְּזוּי bazui, Le Clerc; that is, instead of the active, the passive form, which seems here to be required.

## Verse 9

**To them that are in darkness "And to those that are in darkness"** - Fifteen MSS. (five ancient) of Dr. Kennicott's, eleven of De Rossi's, and one ancient of my own, and the two old editions of 1486 and 1488, and three others, add the conjunction וּ vau at the beginning of this member. Another MS. had it so at first, and two others have a rasure at the place: and it is expressed by the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

## Verse 12

**Behold, these shall come from far** - "Babylon was far and east, ממזרח mimmizrach, (non sic Vett.), Sinim, Pelusians, to the south." - Secker.

**The land of Sinim** - Prof. Doederlein thought of Syene, the southern limit of Egypt, but does not abide by it. Michaelis thinks it is right, and promises to give his reasons for so thinking in the second part of his *Spicilegium Geographiae Hebraeorum Exterae*. See *Biblioth. Oriental.* Part 11 p. 176.

סִין sin signifies a bush, and סִינִים sinim, bushes, woods, etc. Probably this means that the land where several of the lost Jews dwell is a woodland. The ten tribes are gone, no one knows whither. On the slave coast in Africa, some Jewish rites appear among the people, and all the males are circumcised. The whole of this land, as it appears from the coast, may be emphatically called אֶרֶץ שִׁינִים erets sinim, the land of bushes, as it is all covered with woods as far as the eye can reach. Many of the Indians in North America, which is also a woodland, have a great profusion of rites, apparently in their basis Jewish. Is it not possible that the descendants of the ten lost tribes are among those in America, or among those in Africa, whom European nations think they have a right to enslave? It is of those lost tribes that the twenty-first verse speaks: "And these, where had they been?"

## Verse 13

**Break forth into singing, O mountains "Ye mountains, burst forth into song"** - Three ancient MSS. are without the י yod or the conjunction וּ vau before the verb: and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

## Verses 14-26. The Lord encourages disheartened Israel

### Verse 14

**The Lord** (יהוה Yehovah ) hath forsaken me, and my Lord (אדוני Adonai ) hath forgotten me - But a multitude of MSS. and several ancient editions read יהוה Yehovah in both places.

### Verse 16

**Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands "Behold, on the palms of my hands have I delineated thee"** - This is certainly an allusion to some practice, common among the Jews at that time, of making marks on their hands or arms by punctures on the skin, with some sort of sign or representation of the city or temple, to show their affection and zeal for it. They had a method of making such punctures indelible by fire, or by staining. See note on Isaiah 44:6; (note). It is well known, that the pilgrims at the holy sepulcher get themselves marked in this manner with what are called the ensigns of Jerusalem. See Maundrell, p. 75, where he tells us how it is performed: and this art is practiced by travelling Jews all over the world at this day.

### Verse 17

**Thy children shall make haste "They that destroyed thee shall soon become thy builders"** - *Auctor Vulgatae* בוניך banayich, *videtur legisse* בוניך bonayich, *unde vertit, structores tui; cui et Septuaginta fere consentiunt, qui verterunt* ὁικοδομηθης, π aedificata es, prout in Plantiniana editione habetur; in Vaticana sive Romana legitur, οικοδομηθησθ, π aedificaberis. Hisce etiam Targum Jonathanis aliquatenus consentit, ubi, et aedificabunt. Confer infra Esai. Isaiah 54:13, ad quem locum rabbini quoque notarunt en tractatu Talmudico Berachot, c. ix., *quod non legendum sit* בוניך banayich, id est. filii tui; sed בוניך bonayich, *aedificatores tui. Confer not. ad librum* Prec. Jud. part ii., p. 226, ut et D Wagenseil Sot. p. 253, n. 9. "The author of the Vulgate appears to have read בוניך bonayich for בוניך banayich, as he translates it by structures tui, 'thy builders.' The Septuagint is almost the same with the Vulgate, having ὁικοδομηθης, art built, as in the Plantin edition: but the Vatican or Roman copy reads οικοδομηθησθ, those shalt be built. To these readings the Targum of Jonathan has some sort of correspondence, translating et aedificabunt, 'and they shall build.' See Isaiah 54:13; on which place the rabbins also remark, in the Talmudic tract Berachoth, c. 9, that we should not read בוניך banayich, thy sons, but בוניך bonayich, thy builders. See the note in Prae. Jud. part ii., p. 226, and also D. Wagenseil, Sot. p. 253, n. 9. "See also Breithaupt. not. ad Jarchi in loc.; and the note on this place in De Sac. Poes. Hebr. Praelect. 31. Instead of בוניך or

בניך bonayich, thy builders, several MSS. read בניך baneycha, thy sons. So also the Syriac: see the above note.

**Shall go forth of thee "Shall become thine offspring" -** מִמֶּךָ יֵצְאוּ mimmech yetseu, shall proceed, spring, issue, from thee, as thy children. The phrase is frequently used in this sense: see Isaiah 11:1; Micah 5:2; Nahum 1:11. The accession of the Gentiles to the Church of God is considered as an addition made to the number of the family and children of Sion: see Isaiah 49:21, Isaiah 49:22, and Isaiah 60:4. The common rendering, "shall go forth of thee, or depart from thee," is very flat, after their zeal had been expressed by "shall become thy builders:" and as the opposition is kept up in one part of the sentence, one has reason to expect it in the other, which should be parallel to it.

### Verse 18

**Bind them on thee, as a bride doeth "Bind them about thee, as a bride her jewels" -** The end of the sentence is manifestly imperfect. Does a bride bind her children, or her new subjects, about her? Sion clothes herself with her children, as a bride clothes herself, - with what? some other thing certainly. The Septuagint help us out in this difficulty, and supply the lost word: ὡς κοσμοῦν νυμφὴν as a bride her ornaments. ככליה ככליה kichleyha callah, or ככליה ככליה kecallah keleyha . The great similitude of the two words has occasioned the omission of one of them. See Isaiah 61:10.

### Verse 21

**These, where had they been "These then, where were they?" -** The conjunction is added before אלה eleh, that is, ואלה veelleh . in thirty-two MSS. (nine ancient) of Kennicott's, and fifty-four of De Rossi's, and so the Septuagint, Chaldee, and Vulgate. See the note on Isaiah 49:12; (note).

### Verse 22

**Thus saith the Lord God -** אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה Adonai Yehovah . Adonai is wanting in one MS., in the Alexandrine copy of the Septuagint, and in the Arabic.

### Verse 23

**With their face toward the earth "With their faces to the earth" -** It is well known that expressions of submission, homage, and reverence always have been and are still carried to a great degree of extravagance in the eastern countries. When Joseph's brethren were introduced to him, "they bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth," Genesis 42:6. The kings of Persia never

admitted any one to their presence without exacting this act of adoration; for that was the proper term for it. *Necesse est*, says the Persian courtier to Conon, *si in conspectum veneris, venerari te regem; quod προσκυνειν π illi vocant*. "It is necessary, if thou shouldest come in sight, to venerate thee as king; which they call worshipping." - Nepos in Conone. Alexander, intoxicated with success, affected this piece of oriental pride: *Itaque more Persarum Macedonas venerabundos ipsum salutare, prosternentes humi corpora*. "The Macedonians after the manner of the Persians, saluted their monarch with the ceremony of prostration." - Curtius, lib. 8. The insolence of eastern monarchs to conquered princes, and the submission of the latter, is astonishing. Mr. Warmer, Observ. 2:43, gives the following instance of it from D'Herbelot: "This prince threw himself one day on the ground, and kissed the prints that his victorious enemy's horse had made there; reciting some verses in Persian, which he had composed, to this effect: -

"The mark that the foot of your horse has left upon the dust, serves me now for a crown."

"The ring which I wear as the badge of my slavery, is become my richest ornament."

"While I shall have the happiness to kiss the dust of your feet, I shall think that fortune favors me with its tenderest caresses, and its sweetest kisses."

These expressions therefore of the prophet are only general poetical images, taken from the manners of the country, to denote great respect and reverence: and such splendid poetical images, which frequently occur in the prophetic writings, were intended only as general amplifications of the subject, not as predictions to be understood and fulfilled precisely according to the letter. For the different kinds of adoration in the east, see the note on Isaiah 44:17.

## Verse 24

**Shall the prey be taken from the mighty "Shall the prey seized by the terrible be rescued"** - For צדיק tsaddik, read עריץ arits . A palpable mistake, like that in Isaiah 42:19. The correction is self-evident from the very terms of the sentence; from the necessity of the strict correspondence in the expressions between the question and the answer made to it, - and it is apparent to the blindest and most prejudiced eye. However, if authority is also necessary, there is that of the Syriac and Vulgate for it; who plainly read עריץ arits, in Isaiah 49:24; as well as in Isaiah 49:25, rendering it in the former place by the same word as in the latter.



These two last verses contain a glorious promise of deliverance to the persecuted Church of Christ from the terrible one - Satan, and all his representatives and vicegerents, persecuting antichristian rulers. They shall at last cease from destroying the Church of God, and destroy one another.



*King Ashurbanipal Hunting, relief at his palace, Nineveh*

*The Royal Hunt was a popular subject in ancient Near Eastern art, and was especially glorified by the Neo-Assyrians who used it repeatedly in decorating their palace walls. This relief shows king Ashurbanipal (668-c.627 BCE) hunting onagers on horseback. Although the hunting of lions was the most frequently depicted activity in the hunt reliefs, other animals were used as game, such as bulls and gazelle.*



## Chapter 50

### 50. Disobedient Israel versus the obedient Servant

#### Introduction

In this chapter God vindicates his dealings with his people, whose alienation is owing to themselves, Isaiah 50:1. And, by allusion to the temporal deliverances connected with the drying up of the Red Sea and the Euphrates, asserts his power to save, Isaiah 50:2, Isaiah 50:3; namely, by the obedience and sufferings of the Messiah, Isaiah 50:4-6; who was at length to prove victorious over all his enemies, Isaiah 50:7-9. The two last verses exhort to faith and trust in God in the most disconsolate circumstances; with a denunciation of vengeance on those who should trust to their own devices, Isaiah 50:10, Isaiah 50:11.

#### Verses 1-3. The disobedient people presented

##### Verse 1

**Thus saith the Lord** - This chapter has been understood of the prophet himself; but it certainly speaks more clearly about Jesus of Nazareth than of Isaiah, the son of Amos.

**Where is the bill "Where is this bill"** - Husbands, through moroseness or levity of temper, often sent bills of divorcement to their wives on slight occasions, as they were permitted to do by the law of Moses, Deuteronomy 24:1. And fathers, being oppressed with debt, often sold their children, which they might do for a time, till the year of release, Exodus 21:7. That this was frequently practiced, appears from many passages of Scripture, and that the persons and the liberty of the children were answerable for the debts of the father. The widow, 2 Kings 4:1, complains "that the creditor is come to take unto him her two sons to be bondmen." And in the parable, Matthew 18:25; : "The lord, forasmuch as his servant had not to pay, commands him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made." Sir John Chardin's MS. note on this place of Isaiah is as follows: *En Orient on paye ses dettes avec ses esclaves, car ils sont des principaux meubles; et en plusieurs lieux on les paye aussi de ses enfans.* "In the east they pay their debts by giving up their slaves, for these are their chief property of a disposable kind; and in many places they give their children to their creditors." But this, saith God, cannot be my case, I am not governed by any such motives, neither am I urged by any such necessity. Your captivity therefore and your afflictions are to be imputed to yourselves, and to your own folly and wickedness.

## Verse 2

**Their fish stinketh "Their fish is dried up"** - For תבאש tibaosh, stinketh, read תיבש tibash, is dried up; so it stands in the Bodl. MS., and it is confirmed by the Septuagint, ξηρανθησονται, they shall be dried up.

## Verses 4-9. The obedient Servant-Saviour prophesied

### Verse 5

**Neither turned away back "Neither did I withdraw myself backward"** - Eleven MSS. and the oldest edition prefix the conjunction ו vau ; and so also the Septuagint and Syriac.

### Verse 6

**And my cheeks to them that plunked off the hair** - The greatest indignity that could possibly be offered. See the note on Isaiah 7:20; (note).

**I hid not my face from shame and spitting** - Another instance of the utmost contempt and detestation. It was ordered by the law of Moses as a severe punishment, carrying with it a lasting disgrace; Deuteronomy 25:9. Among the Medes it was highly offensive to spit in any one's presence, Herod. 1:99; and so likewise among the Persians, Xenophon, Cyrop. Lib. i., p. 18.

"They abhor me; they flee far from me;

They forbear not to spit in my face."

*Job 30:10.*

"And Jehovah said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days?" Numbers 22:14. On which place Sir John Chardin remarks, that "spitting before any one, or spitting upon the ground in speaking of any one's actions, is through the east an expression of extreme detestation." - Harmer's Observ. 2:509. See also, of the same notions of the Arabs in this respect, Niebuhr, Description de l'Arabie, p. 26. It so evidently appears that in those countries spitting has ever been an expression of the utmost detestation, that the learned doubt whether in the passages of Scripture above quoted any thing more is meant than spitting, - not in the face, which perhaps the words do not necessarily imply, - but only in the presence of the person affronted. But in this place it certainly means spitting in the face; so it is understood in St. Luke, where our Lord plainly refers to this prophecy: "All things that are written by

the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished; for he shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked and spitefully entreated, and spitted on, ἐμπυσθησεται, " Luke 18:31, Luke 18:32, which was in fact fulfilled; και ηρξαντο τινες εμπτειν αυτω, "and some began to spit on him," Mark 14:65, Mark 15:19. If spitting in a person's presence was such an indignity, how much more spitting in his face?

### Verse 7

**Therefore have I set my face like a flint** - The Prophet Ezekiel, Ezekiel 2:8, Ezekiel 2:9, has expressed this with great force in his bold and vehement manner:

"Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces,

And thy forehead strong against their foreheads:

As an adamant, harder than a rock, have I made thy forehead;

Fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks,

Though they be a rebellious house."

### Verse 8

**Who will contend with me** - The Bodleian MS. and another add the word הוּא hu ; הוא מי יריב mi hu yarib, as in the like phrase in the next verse; and in the very same phrase Job 13:19, and so likewise in many other places, Job 17:3; Job 41:1. Sometimes on the like occasions it is זה מי זה mi zeh, and הוא מי זה mi hu zeh, "Who is this one?" The word has probably been lost out of the present text; and the reading of the MSS. above mentioned seems to be genuine.

### Verses 10-11. His promise of salvation and threat of doom

#### Verse 10

**That obeyeth the voice of his servant** "Let him hearken unto the voice of his servant" - For שמע shomea, pointed as the participle, the Septuagint and Syriac read ישמע yishma, future or imperative. This gives a much more elegant turn and distribution to the sentence.

## Verse 10

**That obeyeth the voice of his servant "Let him hearken unto the voice of his servant"** - For שמע shomea, pointed as the participle, the Septuagint and Syriac read ישמע yishma, future or imperative. This gives a much more elegant turn and distribution to the sentence.

## Verse 11

**Ye that kindle a fire** - The fire of their own kindling, by the light of which they walk with security and satisfaction, is an image designed to express, in general, human devices and mere worldly policy, exclusive of faith, and trust in God; which, though they flatter themselves for a while with pleasing expectations and some appearance of success, shall in the end turn to the confusion of the authors. Or more particularly, as Vitringa explains it, it may mean the designs of the turbulent and factious Jews in the times succeeding those of Christ, who, in pursuit of their own desperate schemes, stirred up the war against the Romans, and kindled a fire which consumed their city and nation.

**That compass yourselves about with sparks "Who heap the fuel round about"** - מאזרי megozeley, accendentes, Syr.; forte leperunt pro מאזרי meazzerey מאירי meirey ; nam sequitur אור ur . - Secker. Lud. Capellus, in his criticism on this place, thinks it should be מאזרי meazzerey, from the Septuagint, κατασπινδοντες .

There are others who are widely different from those already described. Without faith, repentance, or a holy life, they are bold in their professed confidence in God - presumptuous in their trust in the mercy of God; and, while destitute of all preparation for and right to the kingdom of heaven, would think it criminal to doubt their final salvation! Living in this way, what can they have at the hand of God but an endless bed of sorrow! Ye shall lie down in sorrow.

But there is a general sense, and accordant to the design of the prophecy, in which these words may be understood and paraphrased: Behold, all ye that kindle a fire - provoke war and contention; compass yourselves about with sparks - stirring up seditions and rebellions: walk in the light of your fire - go on in your lust of power and restless ambition. Ye shall lie down in sorrow - it will turn to your own perdition. See the Targum. This seems to refer to the restless spirit of the Jews, always stirring up confusion and strife; rebelling against and provoking the Romans, till at last their city was taken, their temple burnt to the ground, and upwards of a million of themselves destroyed, and the rest led into captivity!

## Chapter 51

### 51. Encouragement for the faithful

#### Introduction

The prophet exhorts the children of Abraham to trust in the Lord; and briefly, but beautifully, describes the great blessedness which should be the consequence, Isaiah 51:1-3. Then, turning to the Gentiles, encourages them to look for a portion in the same salvation, Isaiah 51:4, Isaiah 51:5; the everlasting duration of which is majestically described, Isaiah 51:6. And as it is everlasting, so is it sure to the righteous, notwithstanding all the machinations of their enemies, Isaiah 51:7, Isaiah 51:8. The faithful, then, with exultation and joy, lift their voices, reminding God of his wondrous works of old, which encourage them to look now for the like glorious accomplishment of these promises, Isaiah 51:9-11. In answer to this the Divinity is introduced comforting them under their trials, and telling them that the deliverer was already on his way to save and to establish them, Isaiah 51:12-16. On this the prophet turns to Jerusalem to comfort and congratulate her on so joyful a prospect. She is represented, by a bold image, as a person lying in the streets, under the intoxicating effects of the cup of the Divine wrath, without a single person from among her own people appointed to give her consolation, and trodden under the feet of her enemies; but, in the time allotted by the Divine providence, the cup of trembling shall be taken out of her hand, and put into that of her oppressors; and she shall drink it no more again for ever, Isaiah 51:17-22.

#### Verses 1-3. The faithful given promise of Zion's future

##### Verse 1

**Ye that follow after righteousness** - The people who, feeling the want of salvation, seek the Lord in order to be justified.

**The rock** - Abraham.

**The hole of the pit** - Sarah; as explained in Isaiah 51:2.

##### Verse 2

**I called him alone** - As I have made out of one a great nation; so, although ye are brought low and minished, yet I can restore you to happiness, and greatly multiply your number.

## **Verses 4-8. The faithful are assured of the fulfilment of the promise to Sion**

### **Verse 4**

**By people - O my nation "O ye peoples - O ye nations"** - For עַמִּי ammi, my people, the Bodleian MS. and another read עַמִּים ammim, ye peoples; and for לְאוּמִי leumi, my nation, the Bodleian MS. and eight others, (two of them ancient), and four of De Rossi's, read לְאוּמִים leummim, ye nations; and so the Syriac in both words. The difference is very material; for in this case the address is made not to the Jews, but to the Gentiles, as in all reason it ought to be; for this and the two following verses express the call of the Gentiles, the islands, or the distant lands on the coasts of the Mediterranean and other seas. It is also to be observed that God in no other place calls his people לְאוּמִי leummi, my nation. It has been before remarked that transcribers frequently omitted the final ם mem of nouns plural, and supplied it, for brevity's sake, and sometimes for want of room at the end of a line, by a small stroke thus /עַמִּי ; which mark, being effaced or overlooked, has been the occasion of many mistakes of this kind.

**A law shall proceed from me** - The new law, the Gospel of our Lord Jesus. Kimchi says, "After the war with Gog and Magog the King Messiah will teach the people to walk in the ways of the Lord."

### **Verse 5**

**My righteousness is near** - The word צֶדֶק tsedek, righteousness, is used in such a great latitude of signification, for justice, truth, faithfulness, goodness, mercy, deliverance, salvation, etc., that it is not easy sometimes to give the precise meaning of it without much circumlocution; it means here the faithful completion of God's promises to deliver his people.

### **Verse 6**

**My salvation shall be for ever** - Aben Ezra says, From this verse divines have learnt the immortality of the soul. Men shall perish as the earth does, because they are formed from it; but they who are filled with the salvation of God shall remain for ever. See Kimchi.

## **Verses 9-16. The faithful petition for a demonstration of the promise by deliverance**

## Verse 11

**They shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away** - Nineteen MSS. and the two oldest editions have יִשְׂגּוּ yasigu ; and forty-six MSS. of Kennicott's and ten of De Rossi's, and the same two editions, and agreeably to them the Chaldee and Syriac, have וְנָסוּ venasu ; and so both words are expressed, Isaiah 35:10, of which place this is a repetition. And from comparing both together it appears that the וּ vau in this place is become by mistake in the present text final, nun of the preceding word.

## Verse 13

**Of the oppressor, as if he, etc.** - "The כ caph in כְּאִשֶּׁר keasher seems clearly to have changed its situation from the end of the preceding word to the beginning of this; or rather, to have been omitted by mistake there, because it was here. That it was there the Septuagint show by rendering ἡμμετισικεχ θλιβοντος σε, of him, that oppressed thee. And so they render this word in both its places in this verse. The Vulgate also has the pronoun in the first instance; *furoris ejus qui te tribulabat.*" Dr. Jubb. The correction seems well founded; I have not conformed the translation to it, because it makes little difference in the sense.

## Verse 14

**The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed "He marcheth on with speed, who cometh to set free the captive"** - Cyrus, if understood of the temporal redemption from the captivity of Babylon; in the spiritual sense, the Messiah, who comes to open the prison to them that are bound.

## Verse 16

**That I may plant the heavens "To stretch out the heavens"** - In the present text it is לִנְתֹּעַ lintoa, "to plant the heavens:" the phrase is certainly very obscure, and in all probability is a mistake for לִנְתֹּחַ lintoth . This latter is the word used in Isaiah 51:13; just before, in the very same sentence; and this phrase occurs very frequently in Isaiah, Isaiah 40:22, Isaiah 42:5, Isaiah 44:24, Isaiah 45:12; the former in no other place. It is also very remarkable, that in the Samaritan text, Numbers 24:6, these two words are twice changed by mistake, one for the other, in the same verse.

## Verses 17-20. Predicament of Jerusalem portrayed



## Verse 17

**The cup of trembling** - כוס התרעלה *cos hattarelah*, "the cup of mortal poison," *veneni mortiferi*. - Montan. This may also allude to the ancient custom of taking off criminals by a cup of poison. Socrates is well known to have been sentenced by the Areopagus to drink a cup of the juice of hemlock, which occasioned his death. See the note on Hebrews 2:9, and see also Bishop Lowth's note on Isaiah 51:21.

## Verse 19

**These two things - desolation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword** - That is, desolation by famine, and destruction by the sword, taking the terms alternately: of which form of construction see other examples. De S. Poesi, Hebrews Prael. xix., and Prelim. Dissert. p. 30. The Chaldee paraphrast, not rightly understanding this, has had recourse to the following expedient: "Two afflictions are come upon thee, and when four shall come upon thee, depredation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword" Five MSS. הרעב *haraab*, without the conjunction ו *vau* ; and so the Septuagint and Syriac.

**By whom shall I comfort thee "Who shall comfort thee"** - A MS., the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate have it in the third person, ינחמך *yenachamech*, which is evidently right.

## Verse 20

**As a wild bull in a net: they are full, etc. "Like the oryx taken in the toils; drenched to the full"** - "Perhaps מכמרה מלאים *michmerah meleim* ." Secker. The demonstrative ה *he*, prefixed to מלאים *meleim*, full, seems improper in this place.

## Verses 21-23. Prediction of Jerusalem's future redemption

### Verse 21

**Drunken, but not with wine** - Aeschylus has the same expression: -

Αἰνοῖς ἐμμανεῖς θυμωμασι·

*Eumen.* 863.

Intoxicated with passion, not with wine.

Schultens thinks that this circumlocution, as he calls it, *gradum adfert incomparabiliter majorem*; and that it means, not simply without wine, but much more than with wine. Gram. Hebrews p. 182. See his note on Job 30:38.

The bold image of the cup of God's wrath, often employed by the sacred writers, (see note on Isaiah 1:22;), is nowhere handled with greater force and sublimity than in this passage of Isaiah, Isaiah 51:17-23. Jerusalem is represented in person as staggering under the effects of it, destitute of that assistance which she might expect from her children; not one of them being able to support or to lead her. They, abject and amazed, lie at the head of every street, overwhelmed with the greatness of their distress; like the oryx entangled in a net, in vain struggling to rend it, and extricate himself. This is poetry of the first order, sublimity of the highest character.

Plato had an idea something like this: "Suppose," says he, "God had given to men a medicating potion inducing fear, so that the more any one should drink of it, so much the more miserable he should find himself at every draught, and become fearful of every thing both present and future; and at last, though the most courageous of men, should be totally possessed by fear: and afterwards, having slept off the effects of it, should become himself again." De Leg. i., near the end. He pursues at large this hypothesis, applying it to his own purpose, which has no relation to the present subject. Homer places two vessels at the disposal of Jupiter, one of good, the other of evil. He gives to some a potion mixed of both; to others from the evil vessel only: these are completely miserable. Iliad 24:527-533.

Δοιοι γαρ τε πιθοι κατακεινται εν Διος ουδει-144 Δωρων, οία διδωσι, κακων, ἑτερος δε εαων, Ὡ μιν καμμιξας δωη Ζευς τερπικεραυνος, Αλλοτε μιν τε κακῳ ὄγε κυρεται, αλλοτε δ ' εσθλῳ· Ὡ δε κε των λυγρων δωη, λωβητον εθηκε.

Και ἐπ κακη βουβρωστις επι χθονα διαν ελαυνει· Φοιτα δ ' ουτε θεοισι τετιμενος, ουτι βροτοισινπ .

"Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,

The source of evil one, and one of good;

From thence the cup of mortal man he fills,

Blessings to these, to those distributes ills;

To most he mingles both: the wretch decreed

To taste the bad unmixed, is cursed indeed:

Pursued by wrongs, by meagre famine driven,

He wanders outcast both of earth and heaven."

### **Verse 23**

**Them that afflict thee "Them who oppress thee"** - The Septuagint, Chaldee, Syriac, and Vulgate appear to have read מוֹנִיךְ monayich, as in Isaiah 40:26." - Secker.

**Which have said to thy soul, Bow down "Who say to thee, Bow down thy body"** - A very strong and most expressive description of the insolent pride of eastern conquerors; which, though it may seem greatly exaggerated, yet hardly exceeds the strict truth. An example has already been given of it in the note to Isaiah 49:23. I will here add one or two more. "Joshua called for all the men of Israel; and said unto the captains of the men of war that went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings," Joshua 10:24. "Adonibezek said, Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: As I have done, so hath God requited me," Judges 1:7. The Emperor Valerianus, being through treachery taken prisoner by Sapor king of Persia, was treated by him as the basest and most abject slave: for the Persian monarch commanded the unhappy Roman to bow himself down, and offer him his back, on which he set his foot, in order to mount his chariot or horse whenever he had occasion. - Lactantius, De Mort. Persec. cap. 5. Aurel. Victor. Epitome, cap. xxxii. -

## **Chapter 52**

### **52. Jerusalem aroused to glory**

*The dark background behind this bright scene is contained in 51:17-23*

### **Introduction**

Jerusalem, in manifest allusion to the strong figure employed in the close of the preceding chapter, is represented as fallen asleep in the dust, and in that helpless state bound by her enemies. The prophet, with all the ardor natural to one who had such joyful news to communicate, bids her awake, arise, put on her best attire, (holiness to the Lord), and ascend her lofty seat; and then he delivers the message he had in charge, a very consolatory part of which was, that "no more should enter into her the uncircumcised and the polluted," Isaiah 52:1-6.

Awaking from her stupefaction, Jerusalem sees the messenger of such joyful tidings on the eminence from which he spied the coming deliverance. She expresses, in beautiful terms, her joy at the news, repeating with peculiar elegance the words of the crier, Isaiah 52:7. The rapturous intelligence, that Jehovah was returning to resume his residence on his holy mountain, immediately spreads to others on the watch, who all join in the glad acclamation, Isaiah 52:8; and, in the ardor of their joy, they call to the very ruins of Jerusalem to sing along with them, because Jehovah maketh bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth are about to see the salvation of Israel's God, Isaiah 52:9, Isaiah 52:10. To complete the deliverance, they are commanded to march in triumph out of Babylon, earnestly exhorted to have nothing to do with any of her abominations, and assured that Jehovah will guide them in all their way, Isaiah 52:11, Isaiah 52:12. The prophet then passes to the procuring cause of this great blessedness to the house of Israel in particular, and to the world in general, viz., the humiliation, sufferings, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ; a very celebrated and clear prophet which takes up the remainder of this and the whole of the following chapter.

## **Verses 1-2. Appeal to Jerusalem to prepare herself for glory**

### **Verse 1**

**There shall no more come into thee** - For יבא yabo, "shall come," לבא lebo, "to come," is the reading of five of Kennicott's and two of De Rossi's MSS. This is the better reading, לא יוסיף לבא ki lo yosiph lebo, "There shall not add to come."

**The uncircumcised and the unclean** - Christians have turned many passages of the prophets against the Jews; and it is not to be wondered at, that in support of their obstinate and hopeless cause, they should press a prophecy into their service, and make it speak against the Christians. This Kimchi does in this place; for he says, by the uncircumcised, the Christians are meant; and by the unclean the Turks. The Christians are uncircumcised and the Turks, though circumcised, and using many ablutions, are unclean in their works.

### **Verse 2**

**Sit down, O Jerusalem "Ascend thy lofty seat, O Jerusalem"** - The literal rendering here is, according to our English translation, "arise, sit;" on which a very learned person remarks: "So the old versions. But sitting is an expression of mourning in Scripture and the ancients; and doth not well agree with the rising

just before." It does not indeed agree, according to our ideas; but, considered in an oriental light, it is perfectly consistent. The common manner of sitting in the eastern countries is upon the ground or the floor with the legs crossed. The people of better condition have the floors of their chambers or divans covered with carpets for this purpose; and round the chamber broad couches, raised a little above the floor, spread with mattresses handsomely covered, which are called sofas. When sitting is spoken of as a posture of more than ordinary state, it is quite of a different kind; and means sitting on high, on a chair of state or throne called the musnud; for which a footstool was necessary, both in order that the person might raise himself up to it, and for supporting the legs when he was placed in it. "Chairs," says Sir John Chardin, "are never used in Persia, but at the coronation of their kings. The king is seated in a chair of gold set with jewels, three feet high. The chairs which are used by the people in the east are always so high as to make a footstool necessary. And this proves the propriety of the style of Scripture, which always joins the footstool to the throne." ( Isaiah 66:1; Psalm 105:1.) Voyages, tom. 9 p. 85, 12mo. Besides the six steps to Solomon's throne, there was a footstool of gold fastened to the seat, 2 Chronicles 9:18, which would otherwise have been too high for the king to reach, or to sit on conveniently.

When Thetis comes to wait on Vulcan to request armor for her son, she is received with great respect, and seated on a silver-studded throne, a chair of ceremony, with a footstool: -

Την μὲν ἐπεὶτα καθίσεν ἐπὶ θρόνου ἀργυροῦλου,-144 Καλοῦ, δαίδαλου· ὑπο  
δὲ θρηνυς ποσὶν ἦενπ .

*Iliad 18:389.*

"High on a throne, with stars of silver graced,

And various artifice, the queen she placed;

A footstool at her feet."

*Pope.*

Ὁ γὰρ θρόνος αὐτοῦ μόνον ἐλευθερίος ἐστὶ καθέδρα συν ὑποποδῖω.

*Athenaeus, 5:4.*

"A throne is nothing more than a handsome sort of chair with a footstool." - L.

## Verses 3-6. The case the Lord presents for His people's liberation

### Verse 4

**Thus saith the Lord God** - אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה Adonai Jehovah ; but Adonai is wanting in twelve of Kennicott's, five of De Rossi's, and two of my own MSS.; and by the Septuagint and Arabic. Some MSS. have יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת Jehovah tsebaoth, "Lord of hosts;" and others have יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים Yehovah Elohim, "Lord God."

### Verse 5

**They that rule over them "They that are lords over them"** - For מְשֻׁלּוֹ moshelo, singular, in the text, more than a hundred and twenty MSS. (De Rossi says, *codices innumeri*, "numberless copies") have מְשֻׁלָּיִם moshelaiv plural, according to the Masoretical correction in the margin; which shows that the Masoretes often superstitiously retained apparent mistakes in the text, even when they had sufficient evidence to authorize the introduction of the true reading.

**Make them to howl "Make their boast of it"** - For יִהְיֶה לֵהֵלֵל yeheililu, "make them to howl," five MSS., (two ancient), have יִהְיֶה לְהַלֵּל yehalelu, "make their boast;" which is confirmed by the Chaldee paraphrast, who renders it מִשְׁתַּבְּחִין mishtabbechin . Ulaloo is not only the cry itself, but also the name of the funeral song of the Irish. The Arabs have a cry very much resembling this.

### Verse 6

**Therefore my people shall know** - The word לָכֵן lachen, occurring the second time in this verse, seems to be repeated by mistake. It has no force nor emphasis as a repetition; it only embarrasses the construction and the sense. It was not in the copies from which the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate were translated; it was not in the copy of the Septuagint from which the Arabic was translated; but in the Aldine and Complutensian editions διὰ τοῦτο is repeated; probably so corrected, in order to make it conformable with the Hebrew text.

**I am he that Moth speak "I am he, Jehovah, that promised"** - For הוּא hu, the Bodleian MS. and another have יְהוָה , Jehovah ; "For I am Jehovah that promised;" and another ancient MS. adds יְהוָה Jehovah after הוּא hu . The addition of Jehovah seems to be right in consequence of what was said in the preceding line, "My people shall know my name."

## Verses 7-10. Praise of prophet and people at Zion's liberation

### Verse 7

**How beautiful** - The watchmen discover afar off, on the mountains, the messenger bringing the expected and much-wished-for news of the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity. They immediately spread the joyful tidings, Isaiah 52:8, and with a loud voice proclaim that Jehovah is returning to Zion, to resume his residence on his holy mountain, which for some time he seemed to have deserted. This is the literal sense of the place.

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the joyful messenger," is an expression highly poetical: for, how welcome is his arrival! how agreeable are the tidings which he brings!

Nahum, Nahum 1:15, who is generally supposed to have lived after Isaiah, has manifestly taken from him this very pleasing image; but the imitation does not equal the beauty of the original: -

"Behold upon the mountain the feet of the joyful messenger,

Of him that announceth peace!

Celebrate, O Judah, thy festivals; perform thy vows:

For no more shall pass through thee the wicked one;

He is utterly cut off."

But it must at the same time be observed that Isaiah's subject is infinitely more interesting and more sublime than that of Nahum; the latter denounces the destruction of the capital of the Assyrian empire, the most formidable enemy of Judah; the ideas of the former are in their full extent evangelical; and accordingly St. Paul has, with the utmost propriety, applied this passage to the preaching of the Gospel, Romans 10:15. The joyful tidings here to be proclaimed, "Thy God, O Zion, reigneth," are the same that John the Baptist, the messenger of Christ, and Christ himself, published: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

From the use made of this by our Lord and the apostles, we may rest assured that the preachers of the Gospel are particularly intended. Mountains are put for the whole land of Judea, where the Gospel was first preached. There seems to be an allusion to a battle fought, and the messengers coming to announce the



victory, which was so decisive that a peace was the consequence, and the king's throne established in the land.

There appear to have been two sorts of messengers among the Jews: one sort always employed to bring evil tidings; the other to bring good. The names also and persons of these different messengers appear to have been well known; so that at a distance they could tell, from seeing the messenger, what sort of tidings he was bringing. See a case in point, 2 Samuel 18:19-27; (note). Ahimaaz and Cushai running to bring tidings of the defeat of Absalom and his rebel army. Ahimaaz is a Good man and bringeth Good tidings.

## Verse 8

**Thy watchmen lift up the voice "All thy watchmen lift up their voice" -**

There is a difficulty in the construction of this place which, I think, none of the ancient versions or modern interpreters have cleared up satisfactorily. Rendered word for word it stands thus: "The voice of thy watchmen: they lift up their voice." The sense of the first member, considered as elliptical, is variously supplied by various expositors; by none, as it seems to me, in any way that is easy and natural. I am persuaded there is a mistake in the present text, and that the true reading is **קול צפיק כל** kol tsophayich, all thy watchmen, instead of **קול צפיק** kol tsophayich, the voice of thy watchmen. The mistake was easy from the similitude in sound of the two letters **כ** caph and **ק** koph . And in one MS. the **ק** koph is upon a rasure. This correction perfectly rectifies the sense and the construction.

**They shall see eye to eye -** May not this be applied to the prophets and apostles; the one predicting, and the other discovering in the prediction the truth of the prophecy. The meaning of both Testaments is best understood by bringing them face to face.

**When the Lord shall bring again Zion "When Jehovah returneth to Zion" -**

So the Chaldee: **כד יתיב כנתייהש לציון** cad yethib shechinteih letsiyon, "when he shall place the shechinah in Zion." God is considered as having deserted his people during the captivity; and at the restoration, as returning himself with them to Zion, his former habitation. See Psalm 60:1; Isaiah 40:9, and note.

## Verse 9

**He hath redeemed Jerusalem "He hath redeemed Israel" -**

For the word **ירושלם** yerushalaim, which occurs the second time in this verse, MS. Bodleian and another read **ישראל** yisrael . It is upon a rasure in a third; and left unpointed

at first, as suspected, in a fourth. It was an easy mistake, by the transcriber casting his eye on the line above: and the propriety of the correction, both in regard to sense and elegance, is evident.

## **Verses 11-12. The importance of their repatriation demands speed and thorough separation from Babylon**

### **Verse 11**

**Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence** - The Prophet Jeremiah seems to have had his eye on this passage of Isaiah, and to have applied it to a subject directly opposite. It is here addressed by the prophet in a way of encouragement and exhortation to the Jews coming out of Babylon. Jeremiah has given it a different turn, and has thrown it out, as a reproach of the heathen upon the Jews when they were driven from Jerusalem into captivity: -

"Depart; ye are polluted, depart; depart ye, forbear to touch.

Yea, they are fled, they are removed: they shall dwell here no more."

*Lamentations 4:15.*

Of the metrical distribution of these lines, see the Prelim. Dissert., p. 58 note.

## **Verses 13-15. The pre-eminence of the Servant epitomised**

### **Verse 13**

**My servant shall deal prudently** - יַשְׁכִּיל yaskil, shall prosper, or act prosperously. The subject of Isaiah's prophecy, from the fortieth chapter inclusive, has hitherto been, in general, the deliverance of the people of God. This includes in it three distinct parts; which, however, have a close connection with one another; that is,

1. The deliverance of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon;
- The deliverance of the Gentiles from their miserable state of ignorance and idolatry; and,
- The deliverance of mankind from the captivity of sin and death. These three subjects are subordinate to one another; and the two latter are shadowed out under the image of the former. They are covered by it as by a veil; which however is transparent, and suffers them to appear through it.

Cyrus is expressly named as the immediate agent of God in effecting the first deliverance. A greater person is spoken of as the Agent who is to effect the two latter deliverances, called the servant, the elect, of God, in whom his soul delighteth; Israel, in whom God will be glorified. Now these three subjects have a very near relation to one another; for as the Agent who was to effect the two latter deliverances, - that is, the Messiah, - was to be born a Jew, with particular limitations of time, family, and other circumstances; the first deliverance was necessary in the order of providence, and according to the determinate counsel of God, to the accomplishment of the two latter deliverances; and the second deliverance was necessary to the third, or rather was involved in it, and made an essential part of it. This being the case, Isaiah has not treated the three subjects as quite distinct and separate in a methodical and orderly manner, like a philosopher or a logician, but has taken them in their connective view. He has handled them as a prophet and a poet; he has allegorized the former, and under the image of it has shadowed out the two latter: he has thrown them all together, has mixed one with another, has passed from this to that with rapid transitions, and has painted the whole with the strongest and boldest imagery. The restoration of the Jews from captivity, the call of the Gentiles, the redemption by Messiah, have hitherto been handled interchangeably and alternately. Babylon has hitherto been kept pretty much in sight; at the same time, that strong intimations of something much greater have frequently been thrown in. But here Babylon is at once dropped, and I think hardly ever comes in sight again; unless perhaps in Isaiah 55:12, and Isaiah 57:14. The prophet's views are almost wholly engrossed by the superior part of his subject. He introduces the Messiah as appearing at first in the lowest state of humiliation, which he had just touched upon before, ( Isaiah 50:5, Isaiah 50:6;), and obviates the offense which would be occasioned by it, by declaring the important and necessary cause of it, and foreshowing the glory which should follow it.

This seems to me to be the nature and the true design of this part of Isaiah's prophecies; and this view of them seems to afford the best method of resolving difficulties, in which expositors are frequently engaged, being much divided between what is called the literal and the mystical sense, not very properly; for the mystical or spiritual sense is very often the most literal sense of all.

Abarbanel seems to have had an idea of this kind, as he is quoted by Vitranga on Isaiah 49:1, who thus represents his sentiments: *Censet Abarbanel prophetam hic transitum facere a liberatione ex exilio Babylonico ad liberationem ex exilio Romano; et, quod hic animadversu dignum est, observat liberationem ex exilio Babylonico esse וראיה אות oth veraayah, signum et argumentum liberationis futurae; atque adeo orationem prophetae de duabus hisce liberationibus in superioribus concionibus saepe inter se permisceri. Verba ejus: "Et propterea*

*verba, sive res, in prophetic superiore inter se permixtae occurrunt; modo de liberatione Babylonica, modo de liberatione extrema accipiendae, ut orationis necessitas exigit.*" Nullum hic vitium, nisi quod redemptionem veram et spiritualem a Messia vero Jesu adductam, non agnoscat. "Abarbanel supposes that the prophet here makes a transition from the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity to the deliverance from the Roman captivity; and (which is worthy of particular note) he observes that the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity is a sign and pledge of the future redemption; and that on this account it is we find in the preceding prophecies the circumstances of the two captivities intimately blended together. His words are the following: 'And, therefore, the words or subjects in the foregoing prophecy are very much intermixed; in one passage the redemption from the Babylonish captivity being treated of, in another the redemption from the general dispersion, as may be collected from the obvious import of the words.' No fault can be found with the above remark, except that the true and spiritual redemption procured by Jesus the Messiah is not acknowledged."

#### Verse 14

**As many were astonished at thee "As many were astonished at him"** - For עליך aleicha read עליי alaiv . So the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate in a MS.; and so likewise two ancient MSS.

**His visage was so marred more than any man** - Most interpreters understand this of the indignities offered to our blessed Lord: but Kimchi gives it another turn, and says, "It means the Jewish people, whom are considered by most nations as having an appearance different from all the people of the earth. "Poor Jews! they have in general a very disagreeable look, partly affected, and partly through neglect of neatness and cleanliness. Most Christians think they carry the impress of their reprobation on every feature of their face. However this may be, it should never be forgotten that the greatest men that ever flourished as kings, judges, magistrates, lawgivers, heroes, and poets, were of Jewish extraction. Isaiah was a Jew; so was Paul, and so was Jesus of Nazareth.

#### Verse 15

**So shall he sprinkle many nations** - I retain the common rendering, though I am by no means satisfied with it. "יזה yazzeh, frequent in the law, means only to sprinkle: but the water sprinkled is the accusative case; the thing on which has אל or אל al or el . Θαυμασονται, ó, makes the best apodosis. ינהג yenhag would do. ינהרו yinharu is used Isaiah 2:2; Jeremiah 31:12; Jeremiah 51:14, but is unlike. 'Kings shall shut,' etc., is good, but seems to want a first part." - Secker. Munster

translates it, *faciet loqui, (de se)*; and in his note thus explains it: יַזְזֵה *yazzezh proprie significat spargere et stillas disseminare; hic hero capitur pro loqui, et verbum disseminare.* "יַזְזֵה *yazzezh properly signifies to sprinkle, and to scatter about drops; but it here means to speak, and to disseminate the word.*" This is pretty much as the Rabbins Kimchi and Sal. ben Belec explain it, referring to the expression of "dropping the word." But the same objection lies to this as to the common rendering; it ought to be יַזְזֵה (דָּבַר) עַל גּוֹיִם *yazzezh (debar ) al goyim .* Bishop Chandler, Defence, p. 148, says, "that to sprinkle is used for to surprise and astonish, as people are that have much water thrown upon them. And this sense is followed by the Septuagint." This is ingenious, but rather too refined. Dr. Duress conjectures that the true reading may be יַעֲזֵזוּ *yechezu*, they shall regard, which comes near to the θαυμασονται of the Septuagint, who seem to give the best sense of any to this place.

"I find in my papers the same conjecture which Dr. Durell made from θαυμασονται in the Septuagint. And it may be added that חָזָה *chazah* is used to express 'looking on any thing with admiration,' Psalm 11:7; Psalm 17:15; Psalm 27:4; Psalm 63:2; Song of Solomon 6:13. It is particularly applied to 'looking on God,' Exodus 24:11, and Job 19:26. Gisbert Cuper, in *Observ. lib. Job 2:1*, though treating on another subject, has some observations which show how nearly ὀραω and θαυμαζω are allied, which, with the peculiar sense of the verb חָזָה *chazah* above noted, add to the probability of θαυμασονται being the version of יַעֲזֵזוּ *yechezu* in the text: οἱ δὲ νῦν λαοὶ Πάντες ἐξ αὐτοῦ ὀρώσι . Hesiod., *id est. cum veneratione quadam adminantur. Hinc ὀραω et θαυμαζω junxit Themistius Or. 1: Εἰτα παύσονται οἱ ἄνθρωποι πρὸς σε μόνον ὀρώνες, καὶ σε μόνον θαυμάζοντες.* Theophrastus in *Charact. c. 3. Ενθυμη ὡς ἀποβλεπουσιν εἰς σε οἱ ἄνθρωποι.* Hence the rendering of this verse seems to be -

"So many nations shall look on him with admiration

Kings shall stop their mouths."

*Dr. Jubb.*

Does not sprinkling the nations refer to the conversion and baptism of the Gentiles? Many nations shall become proselytes to his religion.

**Kings shall shut their mouths at him** - His Gospel shall so prevail that all opposition shall be finally overcome; and kings and potentates shall be overwhelmed with confusion, and become speechless before the doctrines of his truth. When they hear these declared they shall attentively consider them, and their conviction of their truth shall be the consequence.

**For that which had not been told them** - The mystery of the Gospel so long concealed. See Romans 15:21; Romans 16:25.

**Shall they see** - With the eyes of their faith; God enlightening both organ and object.

**And that which they had not heard** - The redemption of the world by Jesus Christ; the conversion of the Gentiles, and making them one flock with the converted Jews. - Trapp

## **Chapter 53**

### **53. Prophecy of the Messiah-Servant as sinbearer**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter foretells the sufferings of the Messiah, the end for which he was to die, and the advantages resulting to mankind from that illustrious event. It begins with a complaint of the infidelity of the Jews, Isaiah 53:1; the offense they took at his mean and humble appearance, Isaiah 53:2; and the contempt with which they treated him, Isaiah 53:3. The prophet then shows that the Messiah was to suffer for sins not his own; but that our iniquities were laid on him, and the punishment of them exacted of him, which is the meritorious cause of our obtaining pardon and salvation, Isaiah 53:4-6. He shows the meekness and placid submission with which he suffered a violent and unjust death, with the circumstances of his dying with the wicked, and being buried with the great, Isaiah 53:7-9; and that, in consequence of his atonement, death, resurrection, and intercession, he should procure pardon and salvation to the multitudes, insure increasing prosperity to his Church, and ultimately triumph over all his foes, Isaiah 53:10, Isaiah 53:11. This chapter contains a beautiful summary of the most peculiar and distinguishing doctrines of Christianity.

That this chapter speaks of none but Jesus must be evident to every unprejudiced reader who has ever heard the history of his sufferings and death. The Jews have endeavored to apply it to their sufferings in captivity; but, alas for their cause! they can make nothing out in this way. Allowing that it belongs to our blessed Lord, (and the best men and the best scholars agree in this), then who can read Isaiah 53:4, Isaiah 53:5, Isaiah 53:6, Isaiah 53:8, Isaiah 53:10, without being convinced that his death was a vicarious sacrifice for the sins of mankind? On the first and second verses of this chapter I have received the following remarks from an unknown hand.

## Verses 1-3. The person of the Servant despised

### Verse 1

**Who hath believed our report?** - The report of the prophets, of John the Baptist, and Christ's own report of himself. The Jews did not receive the report, and for this reason he was not manifested to them as the promised Messiah. 'He came unto his own, but his own received him not.' Before the Father he grew up as a tender plant: but to the Jews he was as a root out of a dry ground. 'He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.'

### Verse 2

**For he shall grow up** - Supposes something to have preceded; as it might be asked, what or who shall 'grow up before him,' etc. As the translation now stands, no correct answer can be given to this question. The translation then is wrong, the connection broken, and the sense obscured. זרע zeroa, translated the arm, from the root zara.

1. To sow, or plant; also seed, etc.
- The limb which reaches from the shoulder to the hand, called the arm; or more properly beginning at the shoulder and ending at the elbow. The translator has given the wrong sense of the word. It would be very improper to say, the arm of the Lord should grow up before him; but by taking the word in its former sense, the connection and metaphor would be restored, and the true sense given to the text. זרע zera signifies, not only the seed of herbs, but children, offspring, or posterity. The same word we find Genesis 3:15, where Christ is the Seed promised. See also Genesis 22:17, Genesis 22:18; Genesis 26:4; Genesis 28:14. Hence the Seed of the woman, the Seed promised to the patriarchs is, according to Isaiah, the Seed of the Lord, the Child born, and the Son given; and according to St. John, 'the Son of God, the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' זרע then, in this place, should be understood to mean Jesus Christ, and him alone. To speak here of the manifestation of the arm or power of God would be irregular; but to suppose the text to speak of the manifestation of Jesus Christ would be very proper, as the whole of the chapter is written concerning him, particularly his humiliation and sufferings, and the reception he should meet with from the Jewish nation.



"The first verse of this chapter is quoted John 12:38, and the former part of the same verse Romans 10:16. But no objection of importance can be brought forward from either of these quotations against the above explanation, as they are quoted to show the unbelief of the Jews in not receiving Christ as the promised Messiah."

**He hath no form nor comeliness "He hath no form nor any beauty" -**

Ουκ εἶδος αὐτῷ, οὐδὲ ἀξίωμα, ἵνα εἰδῶμεν αὐτὸν· οὐδὲ θεωρία, ἵνα ἐπιθυμῶμεν αὐτόν.

"He hath no form, nor any beauty, that we should regard him; nor is his countenance such that we should desire him."

Symmachus; the only one of the ancients that has translated it rightly.

### **Verse 3**

**Acquainted with grief** - For וידוע vidua, familiar with grief, eight MSS. and one edition have וירע veyada, and knowing grief; the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read it ויודע veyodea .

**We hid as it were our faces from him "As one that hideth his face from us"** - For וכמסתיר uchemaster, four MSS. (two ancient) have וכמסתיר uchemastir, one MS. ומסתיר umastir . For פנים panim, two MSS. have פניו panaiu ; so likewise the Septuagint and Vulgate. Mourners covered up the lower part of their faces, and their heads, 2 Samuel 15:30; Ezekiel 29:17; and lepers were commanded by the law, Leviticus 13:45, to cover their upper lip. From which circumstance it seems that the Vulgate, Aquila, Symmachus, and the Jewish commentators have taken the word נגוע nagua, stricken, in the next verse, as meaning stricken with the leprosy: ἐν ἀφῇ ὄντα, Sym.; ἀφῆμενον, Aq.; leprosum, Vulg. So my old MS. Bible. I will insert the whole passage as curious: -

There is not schap to him, ne fairnesse,

And we seegen him, and he was not of sigte,

And we desiriden him dispisid; and the last of men:

Man of souaris and witing infirmitie;

And he hid his cheer and despisid;

Wherfor ne we settiden bi him:

Verili our seeknesse he toke and our sorewis he bair,

And we helden him as leprous and smyten of God, and meekid;

He forsoth wounded is for our wickednesse,

Defoulid is for our hidous giltis

The discipline of our pese upon him,

And with his wanne wound we ben helid.

### **Verses 4-6. The passion of the Servant summarised**

#### **Verse 4**

**Surely he Bath borne our griefs "Surely our infirmities he hath borne" -** Seven MSS. (two ancient) and three editions have חליינו cholayeynu in the plural number.

**And carried our sorrows "And our sorrows, he hath carried them" -** Seventeen MSS. (two ancient) of Dr. Kennicott's, two of De Rossi's, and two editions have the word הוא hu, he, before סבלם sebalam, "carrieth them, "in the text; four other MSS. have it in the margin. This adds force to the sense, and elegance to the construction.

#### **Verse 5**

**The chastisement of our peace "The chastisement by which our peace is effected" -** Twenty-one MSS. and six editions have the word fully and regularly expressed, שלמינו shelomeynu ; *pacificationum nostrarum*, "our pacification;" that by which we are brought into a state of peace and favor with God. Ar. Montan.

#### **Verse 6**

**The Iniquity of us all -** For עון avon, "iniquity," the ancient interpreters read עוונות avonoth, "iniquities," plural; and so the Vulgate in MS. Blanchini. And the Lord hath הפגיע בו hiphgia bo, caused to meet in him the iniquities of us all. He was the subject on which all the rays collected on the focal point fell. These fiery rays, which should have fallen on all mankind, diverged from Divine

justice to the east, west, north, and south, were deflected from them, and converged in him. So the Lord hath caused to meet in him the punishment due to the iniquities of All.

## **Verses 7-10. The perseverance of the Servant particularized**

### **Verse 8**

**And who shall declare his generation "And his manner of life who would declare"** - A learned friend has communicated to me the following passages from the Mishna, and the Gemara of Babylon, as leading to a satisfactory explication of this difficult place. It is said in the former, that before any one was punished for a capital crime, proclamation was made before the prisoner by the public crier, in these words: **כל מי שיודע לו זכות יבא וילמד עליי** col mi shioda lo zachoth yabo vayilmad alaiv, "whosoever knows any thing of this man's innocence, let him come and declare it." Tract. Sandhedrim. Surenhus. Part 4 p. 233. On which passage the Gemara of Babylon adds, that "before the death of Jesus this proclamation was made for forty days; but no defense could be found." On which words Lardner observes: "It is truly surprising to see such falsities, contrary to well-known facts." Testimonies, Vol. 1 p. 198. The report is certainly false; but this false report is founded on the supposition that there was such a custom, and so far confirms the account given from the Mishna. The Mishna was composed in the middle of the second century according to Prideaux; Lardner ascribes it to the year of Christ 180.

Casaubon has a quotation from Maimonides which farther confirms this account: - Exercitat. in Baronii Annales, Art. lxxvi. Ann. 34. Numbers 119. Auctor est Maimonides in Perek 13 *ejus libri ex opere Jad, solitum fieri, ut cum reus, sententiam mortis passus, a loco judicii exhibat ducendus ad supplicium, praecedoret ipsum,* class="greek-hebrew">אֶת־דֹרִי, 'my generation') from my youth, which was at the first among my own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews, who knew me from the beginning, if they would testify; that after the straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee;" Acts 26:4, Acts 26:5.

**דור** dor signifies age, duration, the time which one man or many together pass in this world, in this place; the course, tenor, or manner of life. The verb **דור** dor signifies, according to Castell, *ordinatam vitam sive aetatem egit, ordinavit, ordine constituit.* "He passed a certain course of life, he ordained," etc. In Arabic, curavit, administravit, "he took care of, administered to."

**Was he stricken "He was smitten to death"** - The Septuagint read למות lemaveth, εις θανατον, "to death." And so the Coptic and Saidic Versions, from the Septuagint; MSS. St. Germain de Prez.

"Origen, "(Contra Celsum, lib. 1 p. 370, edit. 1733), after having quoted at large this prophecy concerning the Messiah, "tells us, that having once made use of this passage in a dispute against some that were accounted wise among the Jews, one of them replied, that the words did not mean one man, but one people, the Jews, who were smitten of God and dispersed among the Gentiles for their conversion; that he then urged many parts of this prophecy to show the absurdity of this interpretation, and that he seemed to press them the hardest by this sentence, απο των ανομιων του λαου μον ηχθη εις θανατον, 'for the iniquity of my people was he smitten to death.'" Now as Origen, the author of the Hexapla, must have understood Hebrew, we cannot suppose that he would have urged this last quotation as so decisive if the Greek Version had not agreed here with the Hebrew text; nor that these wise Jews would have been at all distressed by this quotation, unless their Hebrew text had read agreeably to εις θανατον, "to death," on which the argument principally depended; for, by quoting it immediately, they would have triumphed over him, and reprobated his Greek version. This, whenever they could do it, was their constant practice in their disputes with the Christians. Jerome, in his Preface to the Psalms, says, *Nuper cum Hebraeo disputans, quaedam pro Domino Salvatore de Psalmis testimonia protulisti: volensque ille te illudere, per sermones fere singulos asserebat, non ita haberi in Hebraeo, ut tu de lxx. opponerebas.* "Lately disputing with a Hebrew, - thou advancedst certain passages out of the Psalms which bear testimony to the Lord the Savior; but he, to elude thy reasoning, asserted that almost all thy quotations have an import in the Hebrew text different from what they had in the Greek." And Origen himself, who laboriously compared the Hebrew text with the Septuagint, has recorded the necessity of arguing with the Jews from such passages only as were in the Septuagint agreeable to the Hebrew: ινα προς Ιουδαιοις διαλεγομενοι μη προφερωμεν αυτοι τα μη κειμενα εν τοις αντιγραφοις αυτων, και ινα συγγρησωμεθα τοις φερομενοις παρ ' εκεινοις . See Epist. ad African. p. 15, 17. Wherefore as Origen had carefully compared the Greek version of the Septuagint with the Hebrew text, and speaks of the contempt with which the Jews treated all appeals to the Greek version where it differed from their Hebrew text; and as he puzzled and confounded the learned Jews by urging upon them the reading εις θανατον, "unto death," in this place; it seems almost impossible not to conclude, both from Origen's argument and the silence of his Jewish adversaries, that the Hebrew text at that time actually had למות lemaveth, "to death," agreeably to the version of the Septuagint. - Dr. Kennicott.

## Verse 9

**With the rich in his death "With the rich man was his tomb"** - It may be necessary to introduce Bishop Lowth's translation of this verse before we come to his very satisfactory criticisms: -

And his grave was appointed with the wicked;

But with the rich man was his tomb:

Although he had done no wrong,

Neither was there any guile in his mouth.

Among the various opinions which have been given on this passage, I have no doubt in giving my assent to that which makes the ב beth in בְּמוֹתָיו bemothaiv radical, and renders it *excelsa sua*. This is mentioned by Aben Ezra as received by some in his time; and has been long since approved by Schindler, Drusius, and many other learned Christian interpreters.

The most simple tombs or monuments of old consisted of hillocks of earth heaped up over the grave; of which we have numerous examples in our own country, generally allowed to be of very high antiquity. The Romans called a monument of this sort very properly *tumulus*; and the Hebrews as properly בְּמוֹת bamoth, "high place," for that is the form of the noun in the singular number; and sixteen MSS. and the two oldest editions express the word fully in this place, בְּמוֹתָיו bemothaiv . *Tumulus et collem et sepulchrum fuisse significat. Potest enim tumulus sine sepulchro interpretatione collis interdum accipi. Nam et terrae congestio super ossa tumulus dicitur. "Tumulus signifies a sepulcher with a hillock of earth raised over it. The word is sometimes restrained to the bank of earth; for the heaping up of the earth over the bones is named the tumulus."* - Servius, Aen. 3:22. And to make the *tumulus* still more elevated and conspicuous, a pillar or some other ornament was often erected upon it: -

Τυμβὸν χεύαντες, καὶ ἐπὶ στηλὴν ἐρύσαντες, π

Πηξάμεν ἀκροτάτῳ τυμβῷ εὐηρες ἐρετμόν .

*Odyss. sii. 14.*

"A rising tomb, the silent dead to grace,

Fast by the roarings of the main we place;

The rising tomb a lofty column bore,

And high above it rose the tapering oar."

The tomb therefore might with great propriety be called the high place. The Hebrews might also call such a tomb בְּמוֹת bamoth, from the situation, for they generally chose to erect them on eminences. The sepulcher of Joseph of Arimathea, in which the body of Christ was laid, was upon a hill, Mount Calvary. See Isaiah 22:16; (note), and the note there.

"It should be observed that the word בְּמוֹתָיו bamothaiv is not formed from בְּמוֹת bamoth, the plural of בָּמָה bamah, the feminine noun, but from בְּמוֹתִים bamothim, the plural of a masculine noun, בְּמוֹת bamoth. This is noted because these two nouns have been negligently confounded with one another, and absurdly reduced to one by very learned men. So Buxtorf, lex. in voc. בָּמָה bamah, represents בְּמוֹתֵי bamotey, though plainly without any pronoun suffixed, as it governs the word אֶרֶץ arets following it, as only another form of בְּמוֹת bamoth; whereas the truth is, that בְּמוֹת bamoth and בְּמוֹתִים bamothim are different words, and have through the whole Bible very different significations; בָּמָה bamah, whether occurring in the singular or plural number, always signifying a place or places of worship; and בְּמוֹתִים bamothim always signifying heights. Thus in Deuteronomy 32:13; Isaiah 58:14; Amos 4:13; and Micah 1:3, בְּמוֹתֵי אֶרֶץ bamothey arets signifies 'the heights of the earth;' Isaiah 14:14, בְּמוֹתֵי עַב bamothey ab, 'the heights of the clouds;' and in Job 9:8, בְּמוֹתֵי יָם bamothey yam, 'the heights of the sea,' i.e., the high waves of the sea, as Virgil calls a wave praeruptus aqua mons, 'a broken mountain of water.' These being all the places where this word occurs without a suffix, the sense of it seems nearly determined by them. It occurs in other instances with a pronoun suffixed, which confirm this signification. Unluckily, our English Bible has not distinguished the feminine noun בָּמָה bamah from the masculine singular noun בְּמוֹת bamoth; and has consequently always given the signification of the latter to the former, always rendering it a high place; whereas the true sense of the word appears plainly to be, in the very numerous passages in which it occurs, 'a place of worship,' or 'a sacred court,' or 'a sacred inclosure;' whether appropriated to the worship of idols or to that of the true God, for it is used of both, passive. Now as the Jewish graves are shown, from 2 Chronicles 32:33, and Isaiah 22:16, to have been in high situations, to which may be added the custom of another eastern nation from Osbeck's Travels, who says, vol. 1 p. 339, 'the Chinese graves are made on the side of hills;' 'his heights' becomes a very easy metaphor to express 'his sepulcher.'" - Jubb.

The exact completion of this prophecy will be fully shown by adding here the several circumstances of the burial of Jesus, collected from the accounts of the evangelists: -

"There was a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, a member of the sanhedrin, and of a respectable character, who had not consented to their counsel and act; he went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus: and he laid it in his own new tomb, which had been hewn out of the rock, near to the place where Jesus was crucified; having first wound it in fine linen with spices, as the manner of the Jews was to bury the rich and great."

It has been supposed that קברו kibro, his grave, and במתיו bemothaiv, in his death, may have been transposed, as also the prefix ב be originally placed before רשעים reshaim, the wicked. Thus: -

kibro ashir ואת עשיר קברו ויתן ברשעים את מתיו mothaiv eth bireshayim vaiyitten  
veeth

Yea, his death was appointed among the wicked,

And with a rich man, his tomb.

By these alterations it is supposed the text would be freed from all embarrassment. But see the preceding notes of Bishop Lowth, and the various readings of De Rossi, in loc.

## **Verses 10-12. The recompense of the Servant is realised**

### **Verse 10**

**To grief "With affliction"** - For החלי hecheli, the verb, the construction of which seems to be hard and inelegant in this place, the Vulgate reads בחלי bocholi, in infirmity, "with infirmity."

**When thou shalt make his soul "If his soul shall make"** - For תשים tasim, a MS. has תשם tasem, which may be taken passively, "If his soul shall be made" agreeably to some copies of the Septuagint, which have δωτα See likewise the Syriac.

**When thou shalt make his soul an offering** - The word נפש nephesh, soul, is frequently used in Hebrew to signify life. Throughout the New Testament the salvation of men is uniformly attributed to the death of Christ.



**He shall see his seed** - True converts, genuine Christians.

**He shall prolong his days** - Or this spiritual progeny shall prolong their days, i.e., Christianity shall endure to the end of time.

**And the pleasure of the Lord** - To have all men saved and brought to the knowledge of the truth.

**Shall prosper in his hand** - Shall go on in a state of progressive prosperity; and so completely has this been thus far accomplished, that every succeeding century has witnessed more Christianity in the world than the preceding, or any former one.

### Verse 11

**Shall be satisfied "And be satisfied"** - The Septuagint, Vulgate, Sryiac, and a MS. add the conjunction to the verb, וַיִּשְׁבַּע vaigisba .

**Shall my righteous servant justify "Shall my servant justify"** - Three MSS., (two of them ancient), omit the word צַדִּיק tsaddik ; it seems to be only an imperfect repetition, by mistake, of the preceding word. It makes a solecism in this place; for according to the constant usage of the Hebrew language, the adjective, in a phrase of this kind, ought to follow the substantive; and צַדִּיק עַבְדִּי tsaddik abdi, in Hebrew, would be as absurd as "shall my servant righteous justify," in English. Add to this, that it makes the hemistich too long.

### Verse 12

**He bare the sin of many** - רַבִּים rabbim, the multitudes, the many that were made sinners by the offenses of one; i.e., the whole human race; for all have sinned - all have fallen; and for all that have sinned, and for all that have fallen, Jesus Christ died. The רַבִּים rabbim of the prophet answers to the οἱ πολλοί, of the apostle, Romans 5:15, Romans 5:19. As the πολλοί of the apostle means all that have sinned; so the רַבִּים rabbim of the prophet means those for whom Christ died; i.e., all that have sinned.

**And made intercession for the transgressors** - For יַפְגִּיעַ yaphgia, in the future, a MS. has הִפְגִּיעַ hiphgia, preterite, rather better, as agreeable with the other verbs immediately preceding in the sentence.

He made intercession for the transgressors. - This was literally fulfilled at his death, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do!" Luke 23:34. And to

make intercession for transgressors is one part of his mediatorial office. Hebrews 7:25, and Hebrews 9:24.

In this chapter the incarnation, preaching, humiliation, rejection, sufferings, death, atonement, resurrection, and mediation of Jesus Christ are all predicted, together with the prevalence of his Gospel, and the extension of his kingdom through all ages.

## **Chapter 54**

### **54. The radiant joy of restored Israel**

#### **Introduction**

Some suppose this chapter to have been addressed to the Gentiles; some, to the Jewish Church; and some, to the Christian, in its first stage. On comparing the different parts of it, particularly the seventh and eighth verses, with the remainder, the most obvious import of the prophecy will be that which refers it to the future conversion of the Jews, and to the increase and prosperity of that nation, when reconciled to God after their long rejection, when their glory and security will far surpass what they were formerly in their most favored state, vv. 1-17.

#### **Verses 1-10. The blessings of the converted nation**

##### **Verse 1**

**Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear "Shout for joy, O thou barren, that didst not bear"** - The Church of God under the Old Testament, confined within the narrow bounds of the Jewish nation, and still more so in respect of the very small number of true believers, and which sometimes seemed to be deserted of God her husband, is the barren woman, that did not bear, and was desolate. She is exhorted to rejoice, and to express her joy in the strongest manner, on the reconciliation of her husband, (see Isaiah 54:6;), and on the accession of the Gentiles to her family. The converted Gentiles are all along considered by the prophet as a new accession of adopted children, admitted into the original Church of God, and united with it. See Isaiah 49:20, Isaiah 49:21.

##### **Verse 4**

**For thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth** - That is, "The bondage of Egypt: widowhood, the captivity of Babylon." - Secker.

## Verse 7

**For a small moment "In a little anger"** - So the Chaldee and Syriac, either reading רגז regaz, for רגע rega ; or understanding the latter word as meaning the same with the former, which they both make use of. See Psalm 30:5; Psalm 35:20, in the Septuagint, where they render רגע rega by ὀργή, anger.

## Verse 8

**I hid my face from thee for a moment** - The word רגע rega is omitted by the Septuagint, Syriac, and two MSS. of Kennicott's, and two of De Rossi's. It seems to embarrass rather than to help the sentence. Forte reponi debet pro שצף shetseph, quod potest a קצף ketseph errore scribae originem duxisse. "Perhaps it ought to be substituted for שצף shetseph, an error probably made by some scribe from its similarity to קצף ketseph ." - Secker

**Thy Redeemer** - גאלך goalech : but for this word three of De Rossi's MSS. have מרחמך merachamech, thy commiserator.

## Verse 9

**For this is as the waters of Noah unto me "The same will I do now, as in the days of Noah"** - כימי kimey, in one word, in a MS., and some editions; and so the Syriac, Chaldee, Vulgate, Symmachus, Theodotion, Abarbanel, Sal. ben Melec, and Kimchi acknowledge that their copies vary in this place.

It is certain that these two words כי מי ki mey, were written formerly as one. Taken as two כי מי ki mey, they signify for as the waters - when as one, כימי kimey, they signify as the days. This latter reading is found in about four of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS. In one of my own it appears to have been intended as one word: but he who added the points, which are by a much later hand than the MS. itself, has pointed the letters so as to make the two words which are commonly found in the text. For the waters, Symmachus, Theodotion, the Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic have days. The former seems to make the best sense; and the ancient Versions, except the Septuagint, support it.

## Verses 11-17. The radiant beauty of the restored nation

### Verse 11

**Behold, I will lay thy stones "Behold, I lay thy stones"** - These seem to be general images to express beauty, magnificence, purity, strength, and solidity, agreeably to the ideas of the eastern nations; and to have never been intended to

be strictly scrutinized, or minutely and particularly explained, as if they had each of them some precise, moral, or spiritual meaning. Tobit, in his prophecy of the final restoration of Israel, describes the New Jerusalem in the same oriental manner: "For Jerusalem shall be built up with sapphires, and emeralds, and precious stones; thy walls, and towers, and battlements, with pure gold. And the streets of Jerusalem shall be paved with beryl, and carbuncle, and stones of ophir." Tob. 13:16, 17. Compare also Revelation 21:18-21.

## Verse 15

**Shall fall for thy sake "Shall come over to thy side"** - For יפול yippol, twenty-eight MSS. (eight ancient) have יפל yipal, in its more common form. For the meaning of the word in this place, see Jeremiah 37:13.



### ***"I will turn the desert into pools of water (Isaiah 41:18)***

*The prophet Isaiah foretold, "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." (Isaiah 41:18). For many centuries, much of the land of Israel has been a barren waste land due to the lack of water. In recent years, Israel has endured drought conditions and the level of the Sea of Galilee has dramatically decreased. However, a phenomena has and is taking place. Unprecedented rain and snow have been falling in Israel. Ancient brooks, streams and rivers are full and flowing once again. Waterfalls are cascading again from hills and mountaintops. The land of Israel is blossoming like a rose,*

*as foretold by the prophets of old! God is a covenant-keeping God! He is faithful even when we are not! He is keeping His ancient promises that He made to the people of Israel! Prophecy is being fulfilled before our eyes! Jesus IS coming sooner than we think!*

## **Chapter 55**

### **55. Worldwide evangelical invitation**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter first displays the fullness, freeness, excellence, and everlasting nature of the blessings of the Gospel, and foretells again the enlargement of Messiah's kingdom, Isaiah 55:1-5. This view leads the prophet to exhort all to seize the precious opportunity of sharing in such blessings, which were not, however, to be expected without repentance and reformation, Isaiah 55:6, Isaiah 55:7. And as the things now and formerly predicted were so great as to appear incredible, the prophet points to the omnipotence of God, who would infallibly accomplish his word, and bring about those glorious deliverances which he had promised; the happy effects of which are again set forth by images beautiful and poetical in the highest degree, Isaiah 55:8-13.

#### **Verse 1 The invitation offered**

##### **Verse 1**

**Ho, every one that thirsteth** - "Water," says Zimchi, "is a metaphor for the law and wisdom: as the world cannot subsist without water, so it is impossible that it can subsist without wisdom. The law is also compared to wine and milk: to wine because wine rejoiceth the heart, as it is written: 'The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart,' Psalm 19:8. It is compared also to milk, because milk is the subsistence of the child; so are the words of the law the nourishment of his soul who walks in the Divine teaching, and grows up under it."

**Come, buy wine and milk** - In ancient times our forefathers used what is now called the old third person singular, ending in *eth*, for the imperative mood. We have a fine example of His in the first verses of this chapter. I shall present them as they stand in my old MS. Bible: - Alle gee thirstinge cummeth to wateris: and gee that han not sylver, goth forth and bieth, and etith. Cummeth, bieth without silver, and without eny chaungyng, wyn and mylc. Heerith gee, heering me and etith gode thinge, and deliten schal in fattnesse your soule. Bowith in your eie



and cummeth to mee, heerith and liven schal your soule. And I shall smyten with gou, everlastynge covenant, the faithful mercies of David.

#### **Verses 2-4. The invitation enforced**

##### **Verse 2**

**Wherefore do ye spend** - Why should ye be so zealously attached to a doctrine from which your souls derive neither comfort nor nourishment?

##### **Verse 3**

**I will make an everlasting covenant** - Hebrews אכרתה לכם ברית עולם echrethah lachem berith olam, "I will cut the old or everlasting covenant sacrifice with you." That covenant sacrifice which was pointed out of old from the very beginning; and which is to last to the consummation of ages; viz., the Lamb of God that was slain from the foundation of the world.

**The sure mercies of David** - That is, says Kimchi, "The Messiah," called here David; as it is written, "David my servant shall be a prince over you."

#### **Verses 5-7. The invitation extended and defined**

##### **Verse 6**

**Seek ye the Lord while he may be found** - Rab. David Kimchi gives the true sense of this passage: "Seek ye the Lord, because he may be found: call upon him, because he is near. Repent before ye die, for after death there is no conversion of the soul."

#### **Verses 8-13. The invitation authorised and accepted**

##### **Verse 9**

**For as the heavens are higher** - I am persuaded that כ caph, the particle of comparison, is lost in this place, from the likeness of the particle כי ki, immediately preceding it. So Houbigant and Secker. And their remark is confirmed by all the ancient Versions, which express it; and by the following passage of Psalm 103:11, which is almost the same: -

גבר חסדו על יראיו כי כגבה שמים על הארץ haarets al shamayim chigboah ki yereaiv al chasdo gabar

"For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
So high is his goodness over them that fear him."

Where, by the nature of the sentence, the verb in the second line ought to be the same with that in the first; גבה gabah, not גבר gabar : so Archbishop Secker conjectured; referring however to Psalm 117:2.

## Verse 12

**The mountains and the hills** - These are highly poetical images to express a happy state attended with joy and exultation.

*Ipsi laetitia voces ad sidera jactant*

*Intonsi montes: ipsae jam carmina rupes,*

*Ipsa sonant arbusta.*

*Virg. Ecl. 5:61.*

"The mountain tops unshorn, the rocks rejoice;  
The lowly shrubs partake of human voice."  
Dryden.

## Verse 13

**Instead of the thorn "Instead of the thorny bushes"** - These likewise (see note on Isaiah 55:12, and on Isaiah 54:11; (note)) are general poetical images, expressing a great and happy change for the better. The wilderness turned into a paradise, Lebanon into Carmel: the desert of the Gentiles watered with the heavenly snow and rain, which fail not to have their due effect, and becoming fruitful in piety and righteousness: or, as the Chaldee gives the moral sense of the emblem, "instead of the wicked shall arise the just; and instead of sinners, such as fear to sin." Compare Isaiah 35:1, Isaiah 35:2; Isaiah 41:19.

**And instead of** - The conjunction וּ vau is added, ותחת vetachath, in forty-five MSS. of Kennicott's several of De Rossi's, and five editions; and it is acknowledged by all the ancient Versions. The Masoretes therefore might have safely received it into the text, and not have referred us for it to the margin. But



this is no uncommon case with them. Even in our own Version the best reading is very often found in the margin.

## **Chapter 56**

### **56:1-8. Gentiles included in kingdom blessing**

#### **Introduction**

Whoever would partake of the blessings of the Gospel is required to be holy in all manner of life and conversation. And he that will be so is declared to be accepted according to this gracious dispensation, the blessings of which are large as the human race, without any respect to persons or to nations, Isaiah 56:1-8. At the ninth verse begins a different subject, or new section of prophecy. It opens with calling on the enemies of the Jews, (the Chaldeans, or perhaps the Romans), as beasts of prey against them, for the sins of their rulers, teachers, and other profane people among them, whose guilt drew down judgments on the nation, Isaiah 56:9-12.

#### **Verses 1-2. Latter-day Israel admonished to maintain a godly witness.**

##### **Verse 2**

**That keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it** - Kimchi has an excellent note here. "The Sabbath is sanctified when it is distinguished in dignity; and separated from other days.

1. As to the body, in meat, drink, and clean clothing.
- As to the soul, that it be empty of worldly occupations, and be busily employed in the words of the law and wisdom, and in meditation on the works of the Lord." The rabbins say, "Jerusalem had never been destroyed, had not the Sabbaths been profaned in it."

#### **Verses 3-8. Blessing is promised to non-Israelites**

##### **Verse 5**

**I will give them an everlasting name** - For לו lo, him, in the singular, it is evident that we ought to read למו lamo, them, in the plural: so read the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

## Verse 6

**The sons of the stranger** - The Gentiles.

**That join themselves to the Lord** - Who shall enter into the Christian covenant by baptism and faith in Christ, as the Jews and proselytes did by circumcision.

**To serve him** - To live according to the Gospel, and ever do that which is right in the sight of the Lord.

**To love the name of the Lord** - The name of Jesus, the Christ, the Savior of sinners, the Anointed of God, and the Giver of the Holy Spirit to his followers.

**To be his servants** - To worship no other God but Jehovah, and to trust in none for salvation but his Christ.

**That keepeth the Sabbath** - That observes it as a type of the rest that remains for the people of God.

**And taketh hold of my covenant** - בְּרִיתִי biberithi, "of my covenant sacrifice;" as without this he can do nothing good; and without it nothing can be acceptable to the infinite majesty of the Most High.

## Verse 7

**Shall be accepted** - A word is here lost out of the text: it is supplied from the Septuagint, ἢ ἢ yihyu, εἰσονται, "they shall be." - Houbigant.

### 56:9-57:21. Condemnation of the wicked in Israel

#### 56:9-12. The sins of wicked rulers in Israel denounced

## Verse 9

**All ye beasts of the field** - Here manifestly begins a new section. The prophet in the foregoing chapters, having comforted the faithful Jews with many great promises of God's favor to be extended to them, in the restoration of their ruined state, and in the enlargement of his Church by the admission of the Gentiles; here on a sudden makes a transition to the more disagreeable part of the prospect, and to a sharp reproof of the wicked and unbelievers; and especially of the negligent and faithless governors and teachers, of the idolaters and hypocrites, who would still draw down his judgments upon the nation. Probably having in view the destruction of their city and polity by the Chaldeans, and perhaps by the Romans. The same subject is continued in the next chapter; in

which the charge of corruption and apostasy becomes more general against the whole Jewish Church. Some expositors have made great difficulties in the 9th verse of this chapter, where there seems to be none. It is perfectly well explained by Jeremiah, Jeremiah 12:7, Jeremiah 12:9, where, having introduced God declaring his purpose of punishing his people, by giving them up as a prey to their enemies the Chaldeans, a charge to these his agents is given in words very nearly the same with those of Isaiah in this place: -

"I have forsaken my house; I have deserted my heritage;

I have given up the beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies. -

Come away, be gathered together, all ye beasts of the field;

Come away to devour."

**All ye beasts in the forest** "All ye beasts of the forest" - Instead of בַּיְעָר *baiyaar*, three MSS. have יַעַר *yaar*, without the preposition; which seems to be right, and is confirmed by all the ancient Versions.

## Verse 10

**His watchmen are blind** - Kimchi observes, "The flock is intrusted to the care of these watchmen. The wild beasts come; these dogs bark not; and the wild beasts devour the flock. Thus they do not profit the flock. Yea, they injure it; for the owner trusts in them, that they will watch and be faithful; but they are not. These are the false teachers and careless shepherds."

**Dumb dogs, they cannot bark** - See note on Isaiah 62:6.

**Sleeping "Dreamers"** - הֹזִים *hozim*, εὐπνίαζομενοι, Septuagint. This seems to be the best authority for the meaning of this word, which occurs only in this place: but it is to be observed, that eleven MSS. of Kennicott's and De Rossi's, and four editions, have חֹזִים *chazim*, seers, or those who see; and so the Vulgate seems to have read, *videntes vana*, "seeing vain things."

**Loving to slumber** - לָנוּם *lanum* : but six of Kennicott's and seven of De Rossi's MSS. read לָנוּס *lanus*, to fly, "to change their residence:" but what connection such reading can have with the sense of the passage, I cannot discern. What is taken for ס *samech* here is, I have no doubt, a narrow formed final ם *mem*, which has been mistaken for the above. Many instances occur in my own MSS., where the final ם *mem* is similar to the *samech* ; and yet no such change was intended by the scribe.

## Verse 11

**Greedy dogs** - Insatiably feeding themselves with the fat, and clothing themselves with the wool, while the flock is scattered, ravaged, and starved! O what an abundance of these dumb and greedy dogs are there found hanging on and prowling about the flock of Christ! How can any careless, avaricious, hireling minister read this without agitation and dismay?

## Verse 12

**I will fetch wine "Let us provide wine"** - For אֶכְחָה ekchah, first person singular, an ancient MS. has נִכְחָה nikchah, first person plural; and another ancient MS. has אַח ak upon a rasure. So the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate render it. The spirit of this Epicurean sentiment is this: Let us indulge ourselves in the present time to the utmost, and instead of any gloomy forebodings of the future, let us expect nothing but increasing hilarity for every day we shall live. Thus they,

"Counting on long years of pleasure here,

Are quite unfurnished for the world to come."

## Chapter 57

### Introduction

After mentioning the removal of righteous persons as an awful symptom of the approach of Divine judgments, Isaiah 57:1, Isaiah 57:2, the prophet goes on to charge the nation in general with idolatry, and with courting the unprofitable alliance of idolatrous kings, Isaiah 57:3-12. In opposition to such vain confidence, the prophet enjoins trust in God, with whom the penitent and humble are sure to find acceptance, and from whom they should obtain temporal and spiritual deliverances, Isaiah 57:13-19. Awful condition of the wicked and finally impenitent, Isaiah 57:20, Isaiah 57:21.

I shall give Bishop Lowth's translation of the two first verses, and give the substance of his criticisms with additional evidence.

**Isaiah 57:1.** The righteous man perisheth, and no one considereth; And pious men are taken away, and no one understandeth, That the righteous man is taken away because of the evil.

**Isaiah 57:2.** He shall go in peace: he shall rest in his bed; Even the perfect man: he that walketh in the straight path.

### **57:1-13. The sins of the wicked populace in Israel denounced**

#### **Verse 1**

**The righteous perisheth** - אָבָד הצַדִּיק *hatstsadik abad* . There is an emphasis here which seems intended to point out a particular person. See below. Perisheth - As the root אָבָד *abad* signifies the straying of cattle, their passing away from one pasture to another, I feel inclined to follow the grammatical meaning of the word "perish," *pereo*. So the Vulgate, *justus periit*, from *per*, By or Through, and *eo*, to Go. In his death the righteous man may be said to have passed through life, and to have passed by men, i.e., gone or passed before them into the eternal world. A similar mode of speech is used by our Saxon ancestors to express death: he went out of sight; and he went away; and to fare forth, to die.

There are very few places in Isaiah where Jesus Christ is not intended; and I am inclined to think that He is intended here, That Just One; and perhaps Stephen had this place in view, when he thus charged the Jews, "Ye denied τὸν ἁγίον καὶ δίκαιον, that Holy and Just One," Acts 3:14. That his death was not laid to heart by the wicked Jewish people, needs no proof.

**Merciful men** - If the first refers to Christ, this may well refer to the apostles. and to others of the primitive Christians, who were taken away, some by death and martyrdom, and others by a providential escape from the city that they knew was devoted to destruction.

**The evil to come** - That destruction which was to come upon this disobedient people by the Romans.

#### **Verse 2**

**He shalt enter into peace "He shall go in peace"** - יָבוֹא שָׁלוֹם *yabo shalom* ; the expression is elliptical, such as the prophet frequently uses. The same sense is expressed at large and in full terms, Genesis 15:15; : וְאַתָּה תָּבֹא אֶל אֲבוֹתֶיךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם : *veattah libbo al abotheycha beshalom*, "and thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace."

**They shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness "He shall rest in his bed; even the perfect man"** - This obscure sentence is reduced to a perfectly good sense, and easy construction by an ingenious remark of Dr. Durell. He reads יָנוּחַ עַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹ תָם *yanuach al mishcabo tam*, "the perfect man

shall rest in his bed." Two MSS. (one of them ancient) have יָנוּחַ yanuach, singular; and so the Vulgate renders it, requiescat, "he shall rest." The verb was probably altered to make it plural, and so consistent with what follows after the mistake had been made in the following words, by uniting מִשְׁכָּבוֹ mishcabo and תָּם tam into one word. See Merrick's Annotations on the Psalms, Addenda; where the reader will find that J. S. Moerlius, by the same sort of correction, and by rescuing the adjective תָּם tam, which had been swallowed up in another word in the same manner, has restored to a clear sense a passage before absolutely unintelligible: -

לֹמוֹ וְבָרִיא אֲוִלָּם: לֵמוֹ חַרְצֻבוֹת עֵין כִּי ulam ubari tham lemo chartsubboth ein ki

"For no distresses happen to them;

Perfect and firm is their strength."

*Psalm 73:4.*

To follow on my application of this to our Lord: - He, the Just One, shall enter into peace - the peaceable, prosperous possession of the glorious mediatorial kingdom. They shall rest upon their beds - the hand of wrong and oppression can reach these persecuted followers of Christ no more. (But see below.) The perfect man walking in his uprightness. This may be considered as a general declaration. The separated spirit, though disunited from its body walking in conscious existence in the paradise of God, reaping the fruit of righteousness. The word which we render their beds, מִשְׁכֵּבוֹתָם mishkebotham, the learned bishop supposes to be two words; and to be compounded of מִשְׁכָּבוֹ mishkabo, his bed, and תָּם tam, the upright or perfect man. This is the reading both of the Syriac and Vulgate, and it is favored by the Chaldee: and one of De Rossi's MS. has מִשְׁכָּבוֹ mishkabo, his bed, without the word תָּם tam, which has been added by a later hand. Bishop Lowth, as we have seen, adopts this separation of the word and for יָנוּחוּ yanuchu, they shall rest, reads יָנוּחַ yanuach, he shall rest, which is supported by two of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., and by the Vulgate, Septuagint, and Arabic. The word תָּם tam, taken from מִשְׁכֵּבוֹתָם mishkebotham, should begin the latter clause of the verse; and then the interpolated words, each one, which our translators supplied, may be very well spared. The verse may be then read and paraphrased thus; -

He shall enter into peace: he shall rest upon his bed;

The perfect man walking in his uprightness.

The bed must signify the grave; the walking in uprightness after death, the conscious existence of the happy spirit, and its eternal progression in happiness and perfection: נִכְחוֹ nechocho, straight before him; proceeding into the unlimited extent of eternal glory, increasing in happiness, and increasing in perfection.

My old MS. Bible translates very nervously: -

The rigtwise man perishith,

And there is not that bethinke in his herte.

And men of mercy ben gedrid,

For there is not that understonde:

From the face of malice,

Gedreid is the rigtwise.

Cumm pese: reste it in his bed

That geede in his rigt rewlinge.

It has been often remarked that, previously to the execution of God's judgments upon a wicked place, he has removed good men from it, that they might not suffer with the wicked. When great and good men are removed by death, or otherwise, from any place, the remaining inhabitants have much cause to tremble.

## Verse 6

**Among the smooth stones of the stream "Among the smooth stones of the valley"** - The Jews were extremely addicted to the practice of many superstitious and idolatrous rites, which the prophet here inveighs against with great vehemence. Of the worship of rude stones consecrated, there are many testimonials of the ancients. They were called βαιτυλοι and βαιτυλια· probably from the stone which Jacob erected at Beth-el, pouring oil upon the top of it. This practice was very common in different ages and places. Arnobius, lib. i., gives an account of his own practice in this respect before he became a Christian: *Si quando conspexeram lubricatum lapidem, et ex olivi unguine sordidatum; tanquam inesset vis praesens, adulabar, affabar, et beneficia poscebam nihil sentiente de trunco.* "When I have met with a smooth stone, smeared with oil, supposing a spiritual power to be connected with it, I



worshipped it, paid my addresses to it, and requested blessings," etc. Clemens Alex., Strom. lib. vii., speaks of a worshipper of every smooth stone in a proverbial way, to denote one given up to superstition. And accordingly Theophrastus has marked this as one strong feature in the character of the superstitious man: Και των λιπαρων λιθων των εν ταις τριοδοις παριων, εκ της ληκυθου ελαιου καταχειν, και επι γονατα πεσων και προσκυνησας απαλλαττεσθαι . "Passing by the anointed stones in the streets, he takes out his phial of oil, and pours it on them; and having fallen on his knees, and made his adorations, he departs. "Kimchi says: "When they found a beautiful polished stone in a brook or river, they paid Divine adoration to it." This idolatry is still prevalent among the Hindoos. The stone which is the object of their adoration is called *salgram*. They are found about eighty miles from the source of the river Sown, in the viceroyalty of Bahar, on the coast of Bengal. Ayeen Akbery vol. 2 p. 29.

### Verse 8

**Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance "Behind the door, and the door-posts, hast thou set up thy memorial"** - That is, the image of their tutelary gods, or something dedicated to them; in direct opposition to the law of God, which commanded them to write upon the door-posts of their house, and upon their gates, the words of God's law; Deuteronomy 6:9; Deuteronomy 11:20. If they chose for them such a situation as more private, it was in defiance of a particular curse denounced in the law against the man who should make a graven or a molten image, and put it in a secret place; Deuteronomy 27:15. An ancient MS., with another, has אחר achar, without the conjunction ו vau, and.

### Verse 9

**And thou wentest to the king with ointment "And thou hast visited the king with a present of oil"** - That is, the king of Assyria, or Egypt. Hosea, chap, Hosea 12:1, reproaches the Israelites for the same practice: -

"They make a covenant with Assyria,

And oil is carried to Egypt."

It is well known, that in all parts of the east, whoever visits a great person must carry him a present. "It is counted uncivil," says Maundreg, p. 26, "to visit in this country without an offering in hand. All great men expect it as a tribute due to their character and authority; and look upon themselves as affronted, and

indeed defrauded, when the compliment is omitted." Hence שור shur, to visit a person, is equivalent to making him a present; and תשורה teshurah signifies a present made on such occasions; as our translators have rightly rendered it, 1 Samuel 9:7; on which Jarchi says *Menachem exponit תשורה teshurah, quod significat oblationem sive manus, ut aliquis aspiciat faciem regis, aut alicuius magnatis*. "Menachem expounds תשורה teshurah of an offering or gift which is presented in order to be admitted into the presence of the king or some great man."

## Verse 10

**Yet saidst thou not, There is no hope "Thou hast said, There is hope"** - In one of the MSS. at Koningsberg, collated by Lilienthal, the words לו לא אמרת lo amarta, are left in the text unpointed, as suspected; and in the margin the corrector has written ותאמר vattomari. Now if we compare Jeremiah 2:25; and Jeremiah 18:12, we shall find that the subject is in both places quite the same with this of Isaiah; and the sentiment expressed, that of a desperate resolution to continue at all hazards in their idolatrous practices; the very thing that in all reason we might expect here. Probably, therefore, the latter is the true reading in this place.

## Verse 11

**For laid it to thy heart "Nor revolved it in thy hand"** - Eight MSS., (four ancient), and the two oldest editions, with another, add the conjunction ו vau, ולא velo : which is confirmed by all the ancient Versions.

**Even of old "And winked"** - For ומעולם umeolam, which makes no good sense or construction in this place, twenty-three MSS. (seven ancient) and three editions have מעלם malim, (to be thus pointed עלם malim); Παρορω, Septuagint; *quasi non videns*, "as if not seeing," Vulgate. See Psalm 10:1. The truth of this reading, so confirmed, admits of no doubt. In one of my own MSS. the ו vau has been written, but afterwards struck out. Is it not because I was silent, and winked?

## Verse 12

**Thy righteousness "My righteousness"** - For צדקתך tsidkathech, Thy righteousness, the Syriac, Septuagint, MSS. Alex. and Pachom., and 1. D. II., and Marchal. and οι Γ, and the Arabics read צדקי tsidki, My righteousness.

### Verse 13

**Let thy companies deliver thee "Let thine associates deliver thee"** - Thirty-nine MSS. (ten ancient) of Dr. Kennicott's, and two of my own, and the two oldest editions have יצילכּו yatstsiluchu, plural.

### 57:14-21. Mercy for the repentant, but judgment for the wicked

#### Verse 14

**And shall say "Then will I say"** - ואמר vaomer, to be pointed as the first person future. They are the words of God, as it is plain from the conclusion of the verse; my people, עמי ammi .

#### Verse 15

**For thus saith the high and lofty One "For thus saith Jehovah, the high and the lofty"** - A MS. adds יהוה Yehovah, after אמר amar, and edition Prag. 1518. So the Septuagint, Alex., and Arabic. An ancient MS. adds יה Yah .

**With him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit** - Twelve MSS. have את eth, without the conjunction וּ vau . *Pro* ואת veeth, *forte legendum* ואתה veerah : *confer* Psalm 113:5, *et* Psalm 138:6. - Secker. "We should perhaps read ואתה veerah, instead of ואת veeth . See Psalm 113:5, and Psalm 138:6."

#### Verse 16

**For I will not contend for ever** - The learned have taken a great deal of pains to little purpose on the latter part of this verses which they suppose to be very obscure. After all their labors upon it, I think the best and easiest explication of it is given in the two following elegant passages of the Psalms, which I presume are exactly parallel to it, and very clearly express the same sentiment.

"But he in his tender mercy will forgive their sin

And will not destroy them;

Yea, oftentimes will he turn away his wrath,

And will not rouse up his indignation:

For he remembereth that they are but flesh,

A breath that passeth, and returneth not."

*Psalm 78:38, Psalm 78:39.*

"He will not always contend

Neither will he for ever hold his wrath:

As a father yearneth towards his children,

So is Jehovah tenderly compassionate towards them

that fear him For he knoweth our frame;

He remembereth that we are but dust."

*Psalm 103:9, Psalm 103:13, Psalm 103:14.*

In the former of these two passages the second line seems to be defective both in measure and sense. I suppose the word אותם otham, then is lost at the end; which seems to be acknowledged by the Chaldee and Vulgate, who render as if they had read ולא ירחיק אותם velo yaschith otham . -

**For the spirit** - רוח ruach, the animal life.

**And the souls** - נשמות neshamoth, the immortal spirits. The Targum understands this of the resurrection. I will restore the souls of the dead, i.e., to their bodies.

## Verse 17

**For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth "Because of his iniquity for a short time was I wroth"** - For בצעו bitso, I read בצע betsa, a little while, from בצע batsa, he cut of, as the Septuagint read and render it, βραχυ τι, "a certain short space." *Propter iniquitatem avaritiae ejus*, "because of the iniquity of his avarice," the rendering of the Vulgate, which our translators and I believe all others follow, is surely quite beside the purpose.

## Verse 18

**I have seen his ways** - Probably these verses refer to the restoration of the Jews from captivity.

## **Verse 19**

**I create the fruit of the lips** - "The sacrifice of praise," saith St. Paul, Hebrews 13:15, "is the fruit of the lips." God creates this fruit of the lips, by giving new subject and cause of thanksgiving by his mercies conferred on those among his people, who acknowledge and bewail their transgressions, and return to him. The great subject of thanksgiving is peace, reconciliation and pardon, offered to them that are nigh, and to them that are afar off, not only to the Jew, but also to the Gentile, as St. Paul more than once applies those terms, Ephesians 2:13, Ephesians 2:17. See also Acts 2:39.

Peace to him that is far off "That is, to the penitent; and to him that is near, i.e., the righteous." - Kimchi.

## **Verse 21**

**There is no peace, saith my God** - For אֱלֹהֵי Elohai, twenty-two MSS. (five ancient) of Kennicott's, thirty of De Rossi's, and one ancient of my own, read יהוה Yehovah ; the Vulgate, Septuagint, Alex., and Arabic, and three MSS. have both. This verse has reference to the nineteenth. The perseveringly wicked and impenitent are excluded from all share in that peace above mentioned, that reconcilment and pardon which is promised to the penitent only. The forty-eighth chapter ends with the same declaration, to express the exclusion of the unbelievers and impenitent from the benefit of the foregoing promises.

## **Chapter 58**

### **58. False worship versus the true**

### **Introduction**

This elegant chapter contains a severe reproof of the Jews on account of their vices, particularly their hypocrisy in practising and relying on outward ceremonies, such as fasting and bodily humiliation, without true repentance, Isaiah 58:1-5. It then lays down a clear and comprehensive summary of the duties they owed to their fellow creatures, Isaiah 58:6, Isaiah 58:7. Large promises of happiness and prosperity are likewise annexed to the performance of these duties in a variety of the most beautiful and striking images, Isaiah 58:8-12. Great temporal and spiritual blessedness of those who keep holy the Sabbath day, Isaiah 58:13, Isaiah 58:14.

### **Verses 1-5. Hypocritical worship and Israel's sins**

## Verse 1

**Cry aloud, spare not** - Never was a louder cry against the hypocrisy, nor a more cutting reproof of the wickedness, of a people professing a national established religion, having all the forms of godliness without a particle of its power. This chapter has been often appointed to be read on political fast days for the success of wars carried on for - God knows what purposes, and originating in - God knows what motives. Politically speaking, was ever any thing more injudicious?

## Verse 3

**Have we adopted our soul "Have we afflicted our souls"** - Twenty-seven MSS. (six ancient) of Dr. Kennicott's, thirty-six of De Rossi's, and two of my own, and the old edition of 1488 have the noun in the plural number, נפשינו naphsheynu, our souls; and so the Septuagint, Chaldee, and Vulgate. This reading is undoubtedly genuine.

**In the day of your fast ye find pleasure** - Fast days are generally called holidays, and holidays are days of idleness and pleasure. In numberless cases the fast is turned into a feast.

**And exact all your labors** - Some disregard the most sacred fast, and will oblige their servant to work all day long; others use fast days for the purpose of settling their accounts, posting up their books, and drawing out their bills to be ready to collect their debts. These are sneaking hypocrites; the others are daringly irreligious.

## Verse 4

**Ye fast for strife and debate** - How often is this the case! A whole nation are called to fast to implore God's blessing on wars carried on for the purposes of wrath and ambition.

**To smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day "To smite with the fist the poor. Wherefore fast ye unto me in this manner"** - I follow the version of the Septuagint, which gives a much better sense than the present reading of the Hebrew. Instead of רשע לא resha lo, they seem to have read in their copy רש על מה לי rash al mah lli . The four first letters are the same, but otherwise divided in regard to the words; the four last are lost, and א aleph added in their place, in order to make some sort of sense with רשע ל . The

version of the Septuagint is, και τυπτετε τυγμαῖς ταπεινον· ἵνα τι μοι νηστευετε - as above.

## **Verses 6-7. True worship outlined**

### **Verse 6**

**Let the oppressed go free** - How can any nation pretend to fast or worship God at all, or dare to profess that they believe in the existence of such a Being, while they carry on the slave trade, and traffic in the souls, blood, and bodies, of men! O ye most flagitious of knaves, and worst of hypocrites, cast off at once the mask of religion; and deepen not your endless perdition by professing the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, while ye continue in this traffic!

### **Verse 7**

**Deal thy bread to the hungry** - But this thou canst not do, if thou eat it thyself. When a man fasts, suppose he do it through a religious motive, he should give the food of that day, from which he abstains, to the poor and hungry, who, in the course of providence, are called to sustain many involuntary fasts, besides suffering general privations. Wo to him who saves a day's victuals by his religious fast! He should either give them or their value in money to the poor. See Isaiah 58:6.

**That thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house "To bring the wandering poor into thy house"** - πτωχοῦς αστεγοῦς, Septuagint; *egenos vagosque*, Vulgate; and מטלטלין *metaltelin*, Chaldee. They read, instead of מרודים *merudim*, הנודים *hanudim*. מר *mer* is upon a rasure in the Bodleian MS. The same MS. reads ביתה *bayethah*, *in domum*, "into the house." - L.

## **Verses 8-14. The promises for the repentant remnant**

### **Verse 8**

**And thine health shall spring forth speedily "And thy wounds shall speedily be healed over"** - *Et cicatrix vulneris tui cito obducetur* "And the scar of thy wounds shall be speedily removed." Aquila's Version, as reported by Jerome, with which agrees that of the Chaldee.

**The glory "And the glory"** - Sixteen MSS. (five ancient) of Dr. Kennicott's, and the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate add the conjunction ו *vau*, וכבוד *vechabod*.



## Verse 10

**And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry "If thou bring forth thy bread to the hungry"** - "To draw out thy soul to the hungry," as our translators rightly enough express the present Hebrew text, is an obscure phrase, and without example in any other place. But instead of נפשך naphshecha, thy soul, eight MSS. (three ancient) of Kennicott's and three of De Rossi's read לחמך lachmecha, thy bread; and so the Syriac renders it. The Septuagint express both words, τον αρτον εκ της ψυχης σου, "thy bread from thy soul." I cannot help thinking, however, that this reading is a gloss, and should not be adopted. To draw out the soul in relieving the poor, is to do it, not of constraint or necessity, but cheerfully, and is both nervous and elegant. His soul pities and his hand gives.

## Verse 11

**And make fat thy bones "And he shall renew thy strength"** - *Chaldaeus forte legit* עצמתך yachaliph otsmathecha ; *confer cap.* Isaiah 40:29, Isaiah 40:31, *et* Isaiah 41:1. - Secker. "The Chaldee perhaps read יחליף עצמתך yachaliph otsmathecha . "The Chaldee has עלמא וגופך יחיי bechayy veguphach vechaiyey bechayyey alma, "and he will vivify thy body in life eternal." The rest of the ancients seem not to know what to make of יחליץ yachalits ; and the rendering of the Vulgate, which seems to be the only proper one, *ossa tua liberabit*, "he will deliver thy bones," makes no sense. I follow this excellent emendation; to favor which it is still farther to be observed that three MSS., instead of עצמתך atsmotheycha, have עצמתך otsmathecha, singular. - L.

## Verse 12

**The restorer of paths to dwell in "The restorer of paths to be frequented by inhabitants"** - To this purpose it is rendered by the Syriac, Symmachus, and Theodotion.

## Verse 13

**If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath** - The meaning of this seems to be, that they should be careful not to take their pleasure on the Sabbath day, by paying visits, and taking country jaunts; not going, as Kimchi interprets it, more than a Sabbath day's journey, which was only two thousand cubits beyond the city's suburbs. How vilely is this rule transgressed by the inhabitants of this land! They seem to think that the Sabbath was made only for their recreation!

**From doing thy pleasure** - The Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee, for עשות asoth, manifestly express מעשות measoth . So likewise a MS. has it, but with the omission of the words שבת רגלך shabbath raglecha . - L.

**The holy of the Lord "And the holy feast of Jehovah"** - Twenty-eight MSS. (seven ancient) add the conjunction ו vau, ולקדוש velikedosh ; and so the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate. One of my own has the same reading.

**Nor speaking thine own words "From speaking vain words"** - It is necessary to add some epithet to make out the sense; the Septuagint say, angry words; the Chaldee, words of violence. If any such epithet is lost here, the safest way is to supply it by the prophet's own expression, Isaiah 58:9, ודבר און vedabar aven, vain words; that is, profane, impious, injurious, etc.

"The additional epithet seems unnecessary; the Vulgate and Syriac have it not; and the sense is good without it; two ways, first by taking ודבר vedabar for a noun, and דבר dabur for the participle pahul, and rendering, -

'From pursuing thy pleasure, and the thing resolved on.'

Or, secondly, by supposing the force of the preposition מ mem to have been continued from the verb ממצוא mimmetso to the verb ודבר vedabber immediately following; and rendering, -

'From executing thy pleasure, and from speaking words concerning it.'

But the first seems the easier rendering."

Dr. Jubb.

## Verse 14

**Then shalt thou delight thyself** - If all fasts and religious observances be carried on in the spirit and manner recommended above, God's blessing will attend every ordinance. But in public fasts, prescribed not in the Book of God, but by the rulers of nations in general (very unfit persons) care should be taken that the cause is good, and that God's blessing may be safely implored in it.

France has lately fasted and prayed that they might be able to subjugate Spain, restore and establish the horrible inquisition, and utterly destroy all the liberties of the people! Is this such a fast as God hath chosen? - a.d. 1823.

## Chapter 59

### 59. The coming of the Redeemer to Sion

#### Introduction

Thy chapter contains a more general reproof of the wickedness of the Jews, Isaiah 59:1-8. After this they are represented confessing their sins, and deploring the unhappy consequences of them, Isaiah 59:9-15. On this act of humiliation God, ever ready to pardon the penitent, promises that he will have mercy on them; that the Redeemer will come, mighty to save; and that he will deliver his people, subdue his enemies and establish a new and everlasting covenant, Isaiah 59:16-21.

The foregoing elegant chapter contained a severe reproof of the Jews, in particular for their hypocrisy in pretending to make themselves accepted with God by fasting and outward humiliation without true repentance; while they still continued to oppress the poor, and indulge their own passions and vices; with great promises however of God's favor on condition of their reformation. This chapter contains a more general reproof of their wickedness, bloodshed, violence, falsehood, injustice. At Isaiah 59:9; they are introduced as making, themselves, an ample confession of their sins, and deploring their wretched state in consequence of them. On this act of humiliation a promise is given that God, in his mercy and zeal for his people, will rescue them from this miserable condition, that the Redeemer will come like a mighty hero to deliver them; he will destroy his enemies, convert both Jews and Gentiles to himself, and give them a new covenant, and a law which shall never be abolished.

As this chapter is remarkable for the beauty, strength, and variety of the images with which it abounds; so is it peculiarly distinguished by the elegance of the composition, and the exact construction of the sentences. From the first verse to the two last it falls regularly into stanzas of four lines, (see Prelim. Dissert. p. xxi.), which I have endeavored to express as nearly as possible in the form of the original.

#### Verses 1-8. Israel's unbelief and sin of the last days

##### Verse 2

**His face** - For פָּנִים *panim*, faces, I read *panaiv*, his face. So the Syriac, Septuagint, Alexandrian, Arabic, and Vulgate. פָּנִי *panai*, MS. *Forte legendum* פָּנִי *panai*, *nam* מֶמֶם *mem*, *sequitur, et loquitur Deus; confer* cap. Isaiah 58:14. "We should perhaps read פָּנִי *panai* ; for מֶמֶם *mem* follows, and God is the speaker." -

Secker. I rather think that the speech of God was closed with the last chapter, and that this chapter is delivered in the person of the prophet. - L.

### **Verse 3**

**Your tongue "And your tongue"** - An ancient MS., and the Septuagint and Vulgate, add the conjunction.

### **Verse 4**

**They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity** - There is a curious propriety in this mode of expression; a thought or purpose is compared to conception; a word or act, which is the consequence of it, to the birth of a child. From the third to the fifteenth verse inclusive may be considered a true statement of the then moral state of the Jewish people; and that they were, in the most proper sense of the word, guilty of the iniquities with which they are charged.

### **Verse 8**

**Whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace "Whoever goeth in them knoweth not peace"** - For בָּהּ bah, singular, read בָּם bam, plural, with the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and Chaldee. The הּ he is upon a rasure in one MS. Or, for נְחִיבוֹתֵיהֶם nethibotheyhem, plural, we must read נְחִיבָתָם nethibatham, singular, as it is in an ancient MS., to preserve the grammatical concord. - L.

### **Verses 9-15. Israel's last-day confession**

#### **Verse 10**

**We stumble at noon day as in the night "We stumble at mid-day, as in the twilight"** - I adopt here an emendation of Houbigant, נִשְׁגָּגָה nishgegah, instead of the second, נִגְשָׁשָׁה negasheshah, the repetition of which has a poverty and inelegance extremely unworthy of the prophet, and unlike his manner. The mistake is of long standing, being prior to all the ancient versions. It was a very easy and obvious mistake, and I have little doubt of our having recovered the true reading in this ingenious correction.

## Verse 11

**But it is far off from us "And it is far distant from us"** - The conjunction ו vau must necessarily be prefixed to the verb, as the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate found it in their copies; ורחקה verachakah, "and far off."

## Verse 14

**Justice standeth afar off** - צדקה tsedakah, righteousness, put here, says Kimchi, for alms to the poor. This casts some light on Matthew 6:1; : "Take heed that you do not your alms," ελεημοσυνην . But the best copies have δικαιοσυνην, righteousness; the former having been inserted in the text at first merely as the explanation of the genuine and original word.

## Verse 15

**And the Lord saw it "And Jehovah saw it"** - This third line of the stanza appears manifestly to me to be imperfect by the loss of a phrase. The reader will perhaps more perfectly conceive my idea of the matter if I endeavor to supply the supposed defect, I imagine it might have stood originally in this manner: -

וירע בעיניו כי אין משפט Yehovah vaiyar mishpat ein ki  
lo veyachar Yehovah vaiyar וירא יהוה ויחר לו beeyinaiv veyera

"And Jehovah saw it, and he was wroth;

And it displeased him, that there was no judgment."

We have had already many examples of mistakes of omission; this, if it be such, is very ancient, being prior to all the versions.

## Verses 16-19. The Lord's gracious intervention

### Verse 16

**And wondered that there was no intercessor** - This and the following verses some of the most eminent rabbins understand as spoken of the Messiah. Kimchi says that Rabbi Joshua ben Levi proposes this objection: "It is written, 'Behold, he will come in the clouds of heaven as the son of man,' Daniel 7:13; and elsewhere it is written, 'He cometh lowly, and riding upon an ass,' Zechariah 9:9. How can these texts be reconciled? Thus: If the Jews have merit, he will come unto them in the clouds of heaven; but if they be destitute of merit, he will come unto them riding upon an ass." Now out of their own mouth they may be

condemned. They were truly destitute of all merit when Jesus Christ came into Jerusalem riding upon an ass, according to the letter of the above prophecy; and they neither acknowledged nor received him. And that they were destitute of merit their destruction by the Romans, which shortly followed their rejection of him, sufficiently proves.

## Verse 17

**For clothing "For his clothing"** - תלבשת tilbosheth . "I cannot but think that this word, תלבשת tilbosheth, is an interpolation.

1. It is in no one ancient version.

- It is redundant in the sense, as it is before expressed in בגדי bigdey .
- It makes the hemistich just so much longer than it ought to be, if it is compared with the others adjoining.
- It makes a form of construction in this clause less elegant than that in the others.
- It might probably be in some margin a various reading for בגדי bigdey, and thence taken into the text. This is more probable, as its form is such as it would be if it were *in regimine*, as it must be before נקם nakam . - Dr. Jubb. Two sorts of armor are mentioned: a breast-plate and a helmet, to bring righteousness and salvation to those who fear him; and the garments of vengeance and the cloak of zeal for the destruction of all those who finally oppose him, and reject his Gospel.

## Verse 18

**According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay "He is mighty to recompense; he that is mighty to recompense will requite"** - The former part of this verse, as it stands at present in the Hebrew text, seems to me to be very imperfect, and absolutely unintelligible. The learned Vitranga has taken a great deal of pains upon it after Cocceius, who he says is the only one of all the interpreters, ancient or modern, who has at all understood it, and has opened the way for him. He thinks that both of them together have clearly made out the sense; I do not expect that any third person will ever be of that opinion. He says, *Videtur sententia ad verbum sonare: quasi propter facta [adversariorum] quasi propter rependet; excandescantiam, etc., et sic reddidit Pagninus*. "According to the height of their demerits, he will repay them to the height: fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies," etc. - Waterland. This he converts, by a process which will not much edify my reader, into *Secundum summe merita*,

*secundum summe (merita) rependet*; which is his translation. They that hold the present Hebrew text to be absolutely infallible must make their way through it as they can; but they ought surely to give us somewhat that has at least the appearance of sense. However, I hope the case here is not quite desperate; the Chaldee leads us very fairly to the correction of the text, which is both corrupted and defective. The paraphrase runs thus: מַרִּי גַמְלֵיָא הוּא יְשַׁלֵּם marey gumlaiya hu simla yeshallem, "The Lord of retribution, he will render recompense." He manifestly read בַּעַל baal instead of כַּעַל keal. מַרִּי גַמְלֵיָא marey gumlaiya is גַּמְלוֹת baal gemuloth; as מַרִּי מְרִירוּתָא marey merirutha is בַּעַל אָפֶה baal aph. Proverbs 22:24. And so in the Chaldee paraphrase on Isaiah 35:4; מַרִּי גַמְלֵיָא יִי הוּא יִתְגַּלֵּי marey gamlaiya yeya hu yithgeley, "The Lord of retribution, Jehovah himself, shall be revealed;" words very near to those of the prophet in this place.

The second כַּעַל keal, which the Chaldee has omitted, must be read בַּעַל baal likewise. With this only addition to the Chaldee, which the Hebrew text justifies, we are supplied with the following clear reading of the passage: -

hu gemuloth baal yeshallem gemuloth baal The Lord of retributions he

The Lord of retributions, shall repay.

The כַּ caph in כַּעַל keal twice seems to have been at first בֶּ beth, in MS. This verse in the Septuagint is very imperfect. In the first part of it they give us no assistance: the latter part is wholly omitted in the printed copies; but it is thus supplied by MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. II: τοῖς ὑπερβάντοισι αὐτοῦ ἄμυναν τοῖς ἐχθροῖς αὐτοῦ ταῖς νηυσὶν ἀποδομα ἀποτίσει. - L.

## Verse 19

**When the enemy shall come in like a flood** - This all the rabbins refer to the coming of the Messiah. If ye see a generation which endures much tribulation, then (say they) expect him, according to what is written: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."

Kimchi says, he that was the standard-bearer always began the battle by first smiting at the enemy. Here then the Spirit of the Lord is the standard-bearer, and strikes the first blow. They who go against sin and Satan with the Holy Spirit at their head, are sure to win the day.

**The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him "Which a strong wind driveth along"** - *Quam spiritus Domini cogit*, "Which the Spirit of the Lord drives on." - Vulg. נֹסֶסָה nosesah, pihel a נֹס nus fugit. Kimchi says his



father thus explained this word: נוססה nosesah *interpretatur in significatione fugae, et ait, spiritus Domini fugabit hostem; -nam secundum eum* נוססה nosesah *est ex conjugatione quadrata, ejusque radix est* נוס nus : "nosesah he interpreted in the signification of flight, - The Spirit of the Lord shall put the enemy to flight; for according to him the root of the word is נוס nus, he put to flight." The object of this action I explain otherwise. The conjunction ו vau, prefixed to רוּח ruach, seems necessary to the sense, it is added by the corrector in one of the Koningsberg MSS., collated by Lilienthal. It is added also in one of my own.

## **Verses 20-21. The second advent of the Redeemer**

Christ appears in person for the salvation of them who turn from sin (Rom. 11:26-27).

### **Verse 20**

**Unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob "And shall turn away iniquity from Jacob"** - So the Septuagint and St. Paul, Romans 11:26, reading instead of לשבי leshabey and ביעקב beyaacob, והשיב veheshib and מיעקב meyaacob . The Syriac likewise reads והשיב veheshib ; and the Chaldee, to the same sense, ולהשיב ulehashib . Our translators have expressed the sense of the present reading of the Hebrew text: "And unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob."

### **Verse 21**

**This is my covenant with them "This is the covenant which I make with them"** - For אותם otham, them, twenty-four MSS., (four ancient), and nine editions have אתם ittam, with them.

**My Spirit that is upon thee** - This seems to be an address to the Messiah; Kimchi says it is to the prophet, informing him that the spirit of prophecy should be given to all Israelites in the days of the Messiah, as it was then given to him, i.e., to the prophet.

**And my words which I have put in thy mouth** - Whatsoever Jesus spoke was the word and mind of God himself; and must, as such, be implicitly received.

**Nor out of the mouth of thy seed** - The same doctrines which Jesus preached, all his faithful ministers preach; and his seed - genuine Christians, who are all born of God, believe; and they shall continue, and the doctrines remain in the seed's seed through all generations - for ever and ever. This is God's covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

## **Chapter 60**

### **60. Jerusalem's glory in the kingdom age**

#### **Introduction**

The glorious prospect displayed in this chapter seems to have elevated the prophet even above his usual majesty. The subject is the very flourishing condition of the Church of Jesus Christ at that period of the Gospel dispensation when both Jews and Gentiles shall become one fold under one Shepherd. The imagery employed is of the most consolatory and magnificent description. This blessed state of the world shall follow a time of gross darkness, Isaiah 60:1, Isaiah 60:2. The universal diffusion of vital godliness beautifully set forth by a great variety of images, Isaiah 60:3-14. The everlasting duration and spotless purity of this kingdom of Christ, Isaiah 60:15-21. A time appointed in the counsels of Jehovah for the commencement of this happy period; and when this time arrives, the particulars of the prophecy shall have a speedy accomplishment, Isaiah 60:22.

The subject of this chapter is the great increase and flourishing state of the Church of God by the conversion and accession of the heathen nations to it, which is set forth in such ample and exalted terms, as plainly show that the full completion of this prophecy is reserved for future times. This subject is displayed in the most splendid colors under a great variety of images highly poetical, designed to give a general idea of the glories of that perfect state of the Church of God which we are taught to expect in the latter times; when the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in, and the Jews shall be converted and gathered from their dispersions, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

Of the use in prophecy of general or common poetical images, in setting forth the greatness and importance of a future event universally, without descending to particulars, or too minutely explaining circumstances, I have already pretty largely treated in the twentieth prelection on the Hebrew poetry; and have more than once observed in these notes that such images are not always to be applied particularly to persons and things, and were never intended to be minutely explained. I shall add here the opinion of a very learned and judicious person upon this subject: "It is, I think, a mark of right understanding in the language of prophecy, and in the design of prophecy too, to keep to what appears the design and meaning of the prophecy in general, and what the whole of it laid together points out to us, and not to suffer a warm imagination to mislead us from the real intention of the spirit of prophecy, by following uncertain applications of

the parts of it." Lowman on the Revelation, note on Revelation 19:21; (note). - L. To this testimony I must add my own. This is one of the most glorious chapters in the whole of the Old Testament. The splendor, glory, and excellence of the Church of Christ are here pointed out in language which the Spirit of God alone is capable of using. But when shall this state of blessedness take place? Lord, thou only knowest.

## **Verses 1-2. Israel enlightened in the kingdom age**

### **Verse 1**

**Arise** - Call upon God through Christ, for his salvation; and,

**Shine** - אורי ori, be illuminated: for till thou arise and call upon God, thou wilt never receive true light.

**For thy light is come** - כי בא אורך ki ba orech, for thy light cometh. The Messiah is at the door; who, while he is a light to lighten the Gentiles, will be the glory - the effulgence, of his people Israel.

### **Verse 2**

**Darkness shall cover the earth** - This is the state of the Gentile people.

## **Verses 3-14. Israel enlarged in the kingdom age**

### **Verse 3**

**And the Gentiles shall come** - This has been in some sort already fulfilled. The Gentiles have received the light of the Gospel from the land of Judea, and the Gentile kings have embraced that Gospel; so that many nations of the earth are full of the doctrine of Christ.

### **Verse 4**

**Shall be nursed at thy side "Shall be carried at the side"** - תאמנה teamanah, shall be nursed, the Septuagint and Chaldee read תנשאנה tinnasenah, shall be carried. A MS. has על כתף תנשאנה al catheph tinnasenah, "shall be carried on the shoulder;" instead of על צד תאמנה al tsad teamanah, "shall be nursed on the side." Another MS. has both על כתף catheph and על צד tsad. Another MS. has it thus: תנשאנה: תאמנה tinnasenah : teamanah, with a line drawn over the first word. Sir John Chardin says that it is the general custom in the east to carry their children astride upon the hip with the arm round their body. His MS. note

on this place is as follows: - *Coutume en Orient de porter les enfans sur le coste a; califourchon sur la hanche: cette facon est generale aux Indes; les enfans se tiennent comme cela, et la personne qui les porte les embrasse et serre par le corps; parceque sont (ni) emmaillottes, ni en robes qui les embrassent.* "In the east it is the custom to carry the children on the haunch, with the legs astride. This is the general custom in India. The children support themselves in this way, and the arm of the nurse goes round the body and presses the child close to the side; and this they can easily do, as the children are not swathed, nor encumbered with clothes." *Non brachiis occidentalium more, sed humeris, divaricatis tibiis, impositos circumferunt.* "They carry them about, not in their arms after the manner of the western nations, but on their shoulders; the children being placed astride." Cotovic. Iter. Syr. cap. 14. This last quotation seems to favor the reading על כתף by al catheph, on the shoulder, as the Septuagint likewise do: but upon the whole I think that על צד תנשאנה al tsad tinnasenah is the true reading, which the Chaldee favors; and I have accordingly followed it. See Isaiah 66:12. - L. This mode of carrying children is as common in India as carrying them in the arms is in Europe.

## Verse 5

**Then thou shalt see "Then shalt thou fear"** - For תראי tirai, thou shalt see, as ours and much the greater number of the translators, ancient and modern, render it, forty MSS. (ten ancient) of Kennicott's, and twenty-eight of De Rossi's, with one ancient of my own, and the old edition of 1488, have תיראי tirai, thou shalt fear: the true reading, confirmed by the perfect parallelism of the sentences: the heart ruffled and dilated in the second line answering to the fear and joy expressed in the first. The Prophet Jeremiah, Jeremiah 33:9, has the same natural and elegant sentiment: -

"And this city shall become to me a name of joy;

A praise and an honor for all the nations of the earth;

Which shall hear all the good that I do unto them:

And they shall fear, and they shall tremble, at all the goodness

And at all the prosperity that I procure unto her."

And David: -

"I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

*Psalm 139:14;*

His tibi me rebus quaedam divina voluptas

*Percipit atque horror.*

*Lucret. 3:28.*

Recenti mens trepidat metu,

*Plenoque Bacchi pectore turbidum*

*Laetatur.*

Hor. Carm. 2:19. 50:5.

Verse 6

**The praises of the Lord "And the praise of Jehovah"** - Thirty-three MSS. and three editions have ותהלהּ uthehillath, in the singular number; and so read the ancient versions, and one of my own MSS.

**Verse 7**

**The rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee** - Vitranga on the place understands their ministering, and ascending or going up on the altar, as offering themselves voluntarily: *ipsi se, non expectato sacerdote alto, gloriae et sanctificationi divini nominis ultro ac libenter oblaturi*. "They, waiting for no priest, go and freely offer themselves to the glory and sanctification of the sacred name." This gives a very elegant and poetical turn to the image. It was a general notion that prevailed with sacrificers among the heathen, that the victim's being brought without reluctance to the altar was a good omen; and the contrary a bad one. *Sabinos petit aliquanto tristior; quod sacrificanti hostia aufugerat*. Sueton. Titus, cap. 10. *Accessit dirum omen, profugus altaribus tauris*. "It was an omen of dreadful portent when the victim fled away from the altar." Tacit. Hist. 3:56. -

**Verse 8**

**And as the doves to their windows "And like doves upon the wing?"** - Instead of אל el, to, forty-two MSS. of Kennicott's, and one of mine, have by על ,

upon. For ארבתיהם arubboteyhem, their windows, read אברתיהם ebrotheyhem, their wings, transposing a letter. - Houbigant. The Septuagint render it σὺν νεοσσῶσιν, "with their young;" they read אפרחיהם ephrocheyhem, nearer to the latter than to the present reading. - L.

### Verse 9

**The ships of Tarshish first "The ships of Tarshish among the first"** - For בראשונה barishonah twenty-five MSS. and the Syriac read כבראשונה kebarishonah, "as at the first." The ships of Tarshish AS at the first; that is, as they brought gold and silver in the days of Solomon.

### Verse 13

**And I will make the place of my feet glorious "And that I may glorify the place whereon I rest my feet"** - The temple of Jerusalem was called the house of God, and the place of his rest or residence. The visible symbolical appearance of God, called by the Jews the *schechinah*, was in the most holy place, between the wings of the cherubim, above the ark. This is considered as the throne of God, presiding as King over the Jewish state; and as a footstool is a necessary appendage to a throne, (see note on Isaiah 52:2; (note)), the ark is considered as the footstool of God, and is so called, Psalm 99:6; 1 Chronicles 28:2.

**The glory of Lebanon** - That is, the cedar.

### Verses 15-22. Israel exalted in the kingdom age

### Verse 19

**Neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee "Nor by night shall the brightness of the moon enlighten thee"** - This line, as it stands in the present text, seems to be defective. The Septuagint and Chaldee both express the night, which is almost necessary to answer to day in the preceding line, as well as to perfect the sense here. I therefore think that we ought, upon the authority of the Septuagint and Chaldee, to read either ולילה velailah, and by night, instead of ולנגה ulenogah, and for brightness; or בלילה ballilah, adding the word בלילה ballilah, by night.

### Verse 21

**Of my planting** - מטעי mattai ; so, with the Keri, read forty-four MSS. (seven ancient) and six editions; with which agree the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

## Verse 22

**I the Lord will hasten it in his time** - There is a time set for the fulfillment of this prophecy: that time must come before it begins to take place; but when it does begin, the whole will be performed in a short space. It is not, therefore, the time determined for the event that shall be hastened, but all the circumstances of the event; all the parts of the prediction shall be speedily completed. I the Lorde in hys tyme sodeynly schal boun thys. - Old MS. Bible. And because it is the Lord, therefore it will be done: for although it be difficult, he is almighty.

## Chapter 61

### 61. Messiah's ministry for Israel and the world

#### Introduction

The subject of the preceding chapter is continued in this; and to give it the greater solemnity, the Messiah is introduced describing his character and office, and confirming the large promises made before, Isaiah 61:1-9. In consequence of this the Jewish Church is introduced, praising God for the honor done her by her restoration to favor, and by to accession of the Gentiles, which is beautifully described by allusions to the rich pontifical dress of the high priest; a happy similitude to express the ornaments of a restored nation and of a renewed mind, Isaiah 61:10. Certainty of the prophecy illustrated by a figure drawn from the vegetable kingdom, Isaiah 61:11.

#### Verses 1-2. Messiah's ministry in His first advent detailed

##### Verse 1

**The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me "The Spirit of Jehovah is upon me"**

- The Septuagint, Vulgate, and St. Luke, ( Luke 4:18;), and a MS., and two old editions omit the word אֲדֹנָי Adonai, the Lord; which was probably added to the text through the superstition of the Jews, to prevent the pronunciation of the word יהוה Jehovah following. See Kennicott on the state of the printed Hebrew text, vol. i., p. 610.

In most of Isaiah's prophecies there is a primary and secondary sense, or a remote subject illustrated by one that is near. The deliverance of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon is constantly used to shadow forth the salvation of men by Jesus Christ. Even the prophet himself is a typical person, and is sometimes intended to represent the great Savior. It is evident from Luke 4:18; that this is a prophecy of our blessed Lord and his preaching; and yet it is as



evident that it primarily refers to Isaiah preaching the glad tidings of deliverance to the Jews.

**The opening of the prison "Perfect liberty"** - פֶּקַח קוֹחַ pekach koach . Ten MSS. of Kennicott's, several of De Rossi's, and one of my own, with the *Complutensian*, have פֶּקַח קוֹחַ pekachkoach in one word; and so the Septuagint and Vulgate appear to have taken it: not merely opening of prisons, but every kind of liberty - complete redemption.

The proclaiming of perfect liberty to the bound, and the year of acceptance with Jehovah. is a manifest allusion to the proclaiming of the year of jubilee by sound of trumpet. See Leviticus 25:9, etc. This was a year of general release of debts and obligations, of bondmen and bondwomen, of lands and possessions which had been sold from the families and tribes to which they belonged. Our Savior, by applying this text to himself, ( Luke 4:18, Luke 4:19;), a text so manifestly relating to the institution above mentioned, plainly declares the typical design of that institution.

### **Verses 2-3. Messiah's ministry in the second advent**

#### **Verse 3**

**To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion "To impart gladness to the mourners of Zion"** - A word necessary to the sense is certainly lost in this place, of which the ancient Versions have preserved no traces. Houbigant, by conjecture, inserts the word שִׂשׂוֹן sason, gladness, taken from the line next but one below, where it stands opposed to אֵבֶל ebel, sorrow or mourning, as the word lost here was to אֲבֵלֵי abeley, mourners: I follow him. - L.

**Beauty for ashes "A beautiful crown instead of ashes"** - In times of mourning the Jews put on sackcloth, or coarse and sordid raiment, and spread dust and ashes on their heads; on the contrary, splendid clothing and ointment poured on the head were the signs of joy. "Feign thyself to be a mourner," says Joab to the woman of Tekoah, "and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil," 2 Samuel 14:2. These customs are at large expressed in the Book of Judith: "She pulled off the sackcloth which she had on, and put off the garments of her widowhood, and washed her body all over with water and anointed herself with precious ointment, and braided the hair of her head, and put on a tire [mitre, marg.] upon it; and put on her garments of gladness;" chap. 10:3. - L.

פֶּאֶר תַּחַת אֶפְרַיִם peer tachath ephar, glory for ashes; a paronomasia which the prophet often uses: a chaplet, crown, or other ornament of the head (for so the Vulgate renders the word here and in the both verse; in which last place the

Septuagint agree in the same rendering), instead of dust and ashes, which before covered it; and the costly ointments used on occasions of festivity, instead of the ensigns of sorrow.

**Trees of righteousness "Trees approved"** - Hebrews oaks of righteousness or truth; that is, such as by their flourishing condition should show that they were indeed "the scion of God's planting, and the work of his hands;" under which images, in the preceding chapter, Isaiah 60:21, the true servants of God, in a highly improved state of the Church, were represented; that is, says Vitranga on that place, "commendable for the strength of their faith, their durability, and firmness."

#### **Verses 4-9. Results of messiah's ministry at His second advent**

##### **Verse 4**

**"And they that spring from thee"** - A word is lost here likewise. After וּבְנוּ ubanu, "they shall build," add מִמֶּךָ mimmecha, they that spring from thee. Four MSS. have it so, (two of them ancient), and one of mine has it in the margin, and it is confirmed by Isaiah 58:12, where the sentence is the very same, this word being here added. Kimchi makes the same remark: "the word מִמֶּךָ mimmecha is omitted here; but is found in Isaiah 58:12."

**The desolations of many generations** - It seems that these words cannot refer to the Jews in the Babylonish captivity, for they were not there many generations; but it may refer to their dispersions and state of ruin since the advent of our Lord; and consequently this may be a promise of the restoration of the Jewish people.

##### **Verse 5**

**Strangers shall - feed your flocks** - Gentiles shall first preach to you the salvation of Christ, and feed with Divine knowledge the Jewish congregations.

##### **Verse 7**

**For your shame "Instead of your shame"** - The translation of this verse, which is very confused, and probably corrupted in the Hebrew, is taken from the Syriac Version; except that the latter has not expressed the word מִשְׁנֶה mishneh, double, in the first place. Five MSS. add the conjunction וּ vau to שמחת simchath. The Syriac reads תִּרְשׁוּ tirashu, in the second person, "ye shall rejoice, ye shall inherit." And for לָהֶם lahem, to them, two MSS., (one of them

ancient), three of De Rossi's, and the Syriac, read לַחֶמְךָ lachem, to you, in the second person likewise.

The Version of the Septuagint is imperfect in this place; the first half of the verse is entirely omitted in all the printed copies. It is supplied by MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2 in the following manner: -

Αντι της αισχυνης ὑμων της διπλης, -144 Καὶ αντι της εντροπης αγαλλιασεται ἡ μερις αυτων· Δια τουτο την γην αυτων εκ δευτερου -

"Instead of your shame ye shall have double,

And instead of your confusion their portion shall rejoice;

Therefore, they shall possess their land a second time."

In which the two MSS. agree, except that 1. D. 2 has by mistake ἡμερας, day, for ἡ μερις, the part. And Cod. Marchal., in the margin, has pretty nearly the same supplement as from Theodotion. - L.

## Verse 8

**I hate robbery for burnt-offering "Who hate rapine and iniquity"** - The Syriac, and Chaldee prefix the conjunction וּ vau, instead of the preposition בְּ beth, to לַעֲוֹן olah, which they render iniquity or oppression; and so the Septuagint, ἀδικίας . The difference lies in the punctuation; בְּעוֹלָה beolah, in a burnt-offering בְּעוֹלָה beavelah, in iniquity. The letters are the same in both words. Five of De Rossi's MSS. confirm this reading.

## Verse 9

**Their seed shall be known among the Gentiles** - Both Jews and Gentiles are to make but one fold under one shepherd, Christ Jesus. But still, notwithstanding this, they may retain their peculiarity and national distinction; so that though they are known to be Christians, yet they shall appear to be converted Jews. After their conversion to Christianity this will necessarily be the case for a long time. Strange nations are not so speedily amalgamated, as to lose their peculiar cast of features, and other national distinctions.

## **Verses 10-11. The joy of Messiah's ministry is depicted**

### **Verse 10**

**I will greatly rejoice in the Lord** - These may be the words of the Jews now converted, and brought into the Church of Christ, and with the Gentiles made fellow heirs of the blessings of the new covenant.

**As a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments "As the bridegroom decketh himself with a priestly crown"** - An allusion to the magnificent dress of the high priest, when performing his functions; and particularly to the mitre, and crown or plate of gold on the front of it, Exodus 29:6. The bonnet or mitre of the priests also was made, as Moses expresses it, "for glory and for beauty, " Exodus 28:40. It is difficult to give its full force to the prophet's metaphor in another language. The version of Aquila and Symmachus comes nearest to it: ὡς νυμφιον ἱερατευομενον στεφανω· "as a bridegroom decked with a priestly crown."

### **Verse 11**

**The Lord God "The Lord Jehovah"** - "אֲדֹנָי Adonai, the Lord, makes the line longer than the preceding and following; and the Septuagint, Alexandrian, (and MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. II.), and Arabic, do not so render it. Hence it seems to be interpolated." - Dr. Jubb. Three MSS. have it not. See the note on Isaiah 61:1; (note). Both words אֲדֹנָי יהוה Adonai Jehovah, are wanting in one of my MSS.; but are supplied in the margin by a later hand.

## **Chapter 62**

### **62. Jerusalem a praise in the earth**

#### **Introduction**

The prophet opens this chapter with ardent prayers that the happy period of reconciliation just now promised, and here again foretold, may be hastened, Isaiah 62:1-5. He then calls upon the faithful, particularly the priests and Levites, to join him, urging the promises, and even the oath, of Jehovah, as the foundation of their request, Isaiah 62:6-9. And, relying on this oath, he goes on to speak of the general restoration promised, as already performing; and calls to the people to march forth, and to the various nations among whom they are dispersed to prepare the way for them, as God had caused the order for their return to be universally proclaimed, Isaiah 62:10-12.

## **Verse 1. The divine concern for Zion**

### **Verses 2-5. The results of the divine concern for Zion**

#### **Verse 1**

**For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace** - These are the words of Jehovah declaring his purpose relative to the events predicted in the preceding chapter.

**Thou shalt be called by a new name** - Viz., Christian - or, as in the fourth verse, **כֶּהֱפִיטִי בָהּ** chephtsi bah, "my delight is in her" - because she has now received that command, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; Hear Him."

#### **Verse 4**

**Thy land Beulah** - **וּלְהִבֵּעַ** beulah, married. In the prophets, a desolate land is represented under the notion of a widow; an inhabited land, under that of a married woman, who has both a husband and children.

#### **Verse 5**

**For as a young man - so** - The particles of comparison are not at present in the Hebrew Text: but the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee seem to have read in their copies **כִּי** caph prefixed to the verb, **כִּי יִבְעַל** ki keyibal which seems to have been omitted by mistake of a transcriber, occasioned by the repetition of the same two letters. And before the verb in the second line a MS. adds **כֵּן** ken, so; which the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee seem also to have had in their copies. In the third line of this verse the same MS. has in like manner **וְכִמְשֹׁשׁ** vechimsos, and two MSS. and the Babylonish Talmud **כִּמְשֹׁשׁ** kimsos, adding the **כִּי** caph; and in the fourth line, the Babylonish Talmud likewise adds **כֵּן** ken, so, before the verb.

Sir John Chardin, in his note on this place, tells us, "that it is the custom in the east for youths, that were never married, always to marry virgins; and widowers, however young, to marry widows." - Harmer, Observ. 2 p. 482.

**So shall thy sons marry thee** - For **בָּנֶיךָ** banayich, thy sons, Bishop Lowth reads, restorer or builder, as he does not consider the word as the plural of **בֶּן** ben, a son, but the participle benoni of the verb **בָּנָה** banah, he built. I do not see that we gain much by this translation. Thy sons shall dwell in thee, Vulgate; and so the Septuagint and Chaldee.

## Verses 6-12. The concrete expression of the divine concern for Zion

### Verse 6

**Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence** - The faithful, and in particular the priests and Levites, are exhorted by the prophet to beseech God with unremitted importunity (compare Luke 18:1, etc.) to hasten the redemption of Sion. The image in this place is taken from the temple service; in which there was appointed a constant watch, day and night, by the Levites: and among them this seems to have belonged particularly to the singers, see 1 Chronicles 9:33. Now the watches in the east, even to this day, are performed by a loud cry from time to time of the watchmen, to mark the time, and that very frequently, and in order to show that they themselves are constantly attentive to their duty. Hence the watchmen are said by the prophet, Isaiah 52:8, to lift up their voice; and here they are commanded, not to keep silence; and the greatest reproach to them is, that they are dumb dogs; they cannot bark; dreamers; sluggards, loving to slumber, Isaiah 56:10. "The watchmen in the camp of the caravans go their rounds crying one after another, 'God is one, he is merciful:' and often add, 'Take heed to yourselves.'" Tavernier, *Voyage de Perse*, 54:1 chap. 10. The hundred and thirty-fourth Psalm gives us an example of the temple watch. The whole Psalm is nothing more than the alternate cry of two different divisions of the watch. The first watch addresses the second, reminding them of their duty; the second answers by a solemn blessing. The address and the answer seem both to be a set form, which each division proclaimed, or sung aloud, at stated intervals, to notify the time of the night: -

#### First Chorus

"Come on now, bless ye Jehovah, all ye servants of Jehovah;

Ye that stand in the house of Jehovah in the nights;

Lift up your hands towards the sanctuary,

And bless ye Jehovah."

#### Second Chorus

"Jehovah bless thee out of Sion;

He that made heaven and earth."

"Ye who stand in the place of the watch, in the house of the sanctuary of the Lord; and ye praise through the nights;" - says the Chaldee paraphrase on the second line. And this explains what is here particularly meant by proclaiming, or making remembrance of, the name of Jehovah: the form, which the watch made use of on these occasions, was always a short sentence, expressing some pious sentiment, of which Jehovah was the subject; and it is remarkable, that the custom in the east in this respect also still continues the very same; as appears by the example above given from Tavernier.

And this observation leads to the explanation of an obscure passage in the Prophet Malachi, Malachi 2:12.

"Jehovah will cut off the man that doeth this;

The watchman and the answerer, from the tabernacles of Jacob;

And him that presenteth an offering to Jehovah God of hosts."

ער ועונה er veoneh, the master and the scholar, says our translation, after the Vulgate: the son and the grandson, says the Syriac and Chaldee, as little to the purpose: Arias Montanus has given it *vigilantem et respondentem*, "the watchman and the answerer;" that is, the Levite and "him that presenteth an offering to Jehovah," that is, the priest. - L. Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence. Is not this clause an address to the ministers of Christ, to continue in supplication for the conversion of the Jewish people? Kimchi seems to think that the watchmen are the interceding angels!

## Verse 9

**But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord** - This and the following line have reference to the law of Moses: "Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil; but thou must eat them before the Lord thy God, in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose," Deuteronomy 12:17, Deuteronomy 12:18. "And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: three years it shall be as uncircumcised unto you; it shall not be eaten of. But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy to praise the Lord withal. And in the fifth year ye shall eat the fruit thereof," Leviticus 19:23-25. This clearly explains the force of the expressions, "shall praise Jehovah," and "shall drink it in my sacred courts."



Five MSS., one ancient, have יאכלוהו yocheluhu, they shall eat it, fully expressed: and so likewise ישתוהו yishtuhu, they shall drink it, is found in nineteen MSS., three of them ancient. - L.

### Verse 10

**Of the people "For the people"** - Before the word העם haam, the people, two MSS. insert יהוה Yehovah ; one MS. adds the same word after; and eight MSS., three ancient, instead of העם haam, have יהוה Yehovah, and so likewise one edition. But though it makes a good sense either way, I believe it to be an interpolation, as the ancient Versions do not favor it. The Septuagint indeed read עמי ammi, my people. - L.

### Verse 11

**Unto the end of the world** - אל קצה הארץ el ketseh haarets - Instead of אל el, to, עד ad, Unto, is the reading of two of Kennicott's MSS.; and one of mine has מקצה mikketseh, "From the end of the earth."

**Behold, thy salvation cometh "Lo, thy Savior cometh"** - So all the ancient Versions render the word ישעך yishech .

**Behold, his reward** - See note on Isaiah 40:10, Isaiah 40:11. This reward he carries as it were in his hand. His work is before him - he perfectly knows what is to be done; and is perfectly able to do it. He will do what God should do, and what man cannot do; and men should be workers with him. Let no man fear that the promise shall not be fulfilled on account of its difficulty, its greatness, the hinderances in the way, or the unworthiness of the person to whom it is made. It is God's work; he is able to do it, and as willing as he is able.

### Verse 12

**They shall call them** - These characteristics seem to be put in their inverted order. -

1. God will not forsake them.

- They shall be sought out.
- They shall be redeemed. And,
- Be in consequence a holy people. 1. When God calls, it is a proof that he has not forsaken.

2. When he seeks, it is a proof he is waiting to be gracious.
3. When the atonement is exhibited, all things are then ready.
4. And when that is received, holiness of heart and life is then to be kept continually in view, as this is the genuine work of God's Spirit; and without holiness none shall see the Lord.

## **Chapter 63**

### **63:1-6. The Messiah-Avenger and the day of vengeance**

#### **Introduction**

The prophet, (or rather the Church he represents), sees the great Deliverer, long promised and expected, making his appearance, after having crushed his enemies, like grapes in the wine-vat. The comparison suggests a lively idea of the wrath of Omnipotence, which its unhappy objects can no more resist than the grapes can resist the treader. Indeed, there is so much pathos, energy, and sublimity in this remarkable passage, as hardly any thing can be conceived to exceed. The period to which it refers must be the same with that predicted in the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation, some parts of which are expressed in the same terms with this, and plainly enough refer to the very sudden and total overthrow of Antichrist, and of all his adherents and auxiliaries, of which the destruction of Babylon, the capital of Chaldea, and of Bozra, the chief city of the Edomites, was the prototype, Isaiah 63:1-6. At the seventh verse commences a penitential confession and supplication of the Jews, as uttered in their present dispersion, Isaiah 63:7-19.

The very remarkable passage with which this chapter begins seems to me to be, in a manner, detached from the rest, and to stand singly by itself; having no immediate connection with what goes before, or with what follows, otherwise than as it may pursue the general design, and stand in its proper place in the order of prophecy. It is by many learned interpreters supposed that Judas Maccabeus and his victories make the subject of it. What claim Judas can have to so great an honor will, I think, be very difficult to make out; or how the attributes of the great person introduced can possibly suit him. Could Judas call himself the announcer of righteousness, mighty to save? Could he talk of the day of vengeance being in his heart, and the year of his redeemed being come? or that his own arm wrought salvation for him? Besides, what were the great exploits of Judas in regard to the Idumeans? He overcame them in battle, and slew twenty thousand of them. And John Hyrcanus, his brother Simon's son and successor, who is called in to help out the accomplishment of the prophecy, gave

them another defeat some time afterward, and compelled them by force to become proselytes to the Jewish religion, and to submit to circumcision: after which they were incorporated with the Jews, and became one people with them. Are these events adequate to the prophet's lofty prediction? Was it so great an action to win a battle with considerable slaughter of the enemy or to force a whole nation by dint of the sword into Judaism? or was the conversion of the Idumeans, however effected, and their admission into the Church of God, equivalent to a most grievous judgment and destruction, threatened in the severest terms? But here is another very material circumstance to be considered, which, I presume, entirely excludes Judas Maccabeus, and even the Idumeans, properly so called. For the Idumea of the prophet's time was quite a different country from that which Judas conquered. For during the Babylonish captivity the Nabatheans had driven the Edomites out of their country; who upon that took possession of the southern parts of Judea, and settled themselves there; that is, in the country of the whole tribe of Simeon and in half of that of Judah. See Prideaux, ad. an. 740 and 165. And the metropolis of the Edomites, and of the country thence called Idumea, which Judas took, was Hebron 1 Maccabees 5:65, not Bozrah.

I conclude, therefore, that this prophecy has not the least relation to Judas Maccabeus. It may be asked, to whom, and to what event does it relate? I can only answer, that I know of no event in history to which, from its importance and circumstances, it can be applied: unless, perhaps, to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish polity; which in the Gospel is called the coming of Christ and the days of vengeance, Matthew 16:28; Luke 21:22. But though this prophecy must have its accomplishment, there is no necessity for supposing that it has been already accomplished. There are prophecies, which intimate a great slaughter of the enemies of God and his people, which remain to be fulfilled; these in Ezekiel, chap. 38, and in the Revelation of St. John, Revelation 20:1-15, are called Gog and Magog. This prophecy of Isaiah may possibly refer to the same or the like event. We need not be at a loss to determine the person who is here introduced, as stained with treading the wine-press, if we consider how St. John in the Revelation has applied this image of the prophet, Revelation 19:13, Revelation 19:15, Revelation 19:16. Compare chap. 34.

## **Verses 1-2. Messiah the Avenger interrogated**

### **Verses 1-6. Messiah the Avenger's answer**

#### **Verse 1**

**Who is this that cometh from Edom** - Probably both Edom and Bozrah are only figurative expressions, to point out the place in which God should discomfit his enemies. Edom signifies red, and Bozrah, a vintage. Kimchi interprets the whole of the destruction of Rome.

**I that speak in righteousness "I who publish righteousness"** - A MS. has **המדבר** hammedabber, with the demonstrative article added with greater force and emphasis: The announcer of righteousness. A MS. has **צדקה** tsedakah, without **ב** be prefixed; and so the Septuagint and Vulgate. And thirty-eight MSS. (seven ancient) of Dr. Kennicott's, and many of De Rossi's, and one of my own, add the conjunction **ו** vau to **רב** rab, and mighty; which the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate confirm.

#### **Verse 2**

**Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel** - For **ללבושך** lilebushecha, twenty-nine MSS. (nine ancient) of Kennicott's, and thirty of De Rossi's, and one edition, have **ללבושיך** lilebusheycha in the plural; so the Septuagint and Syriac. And all the ancient Versions read it with **מ** mem, instead of the first **ל** lamed. But the true reading is probably **מלבושך** malbushecha in the singular, as in Isaiah 63:3.

#### **Verse 3**

**And of the people there was none with me** - I was wholly abandoned by them: but a good meaning is, No man has had any part in making the atonement; it is entirely the work of the Messiah alone. No created being could have any part in a sacrifice that was to be of infinite merit.

**And I will stain "And I have stained"** - For **אגאלי** egalti, a verb of very irregular formation, compounded, as they say, of the two forms of the preterite and future, a MS. has **אגאלהו** egalehu, the regular future with a pleonastic pronoun added to it, according to the Hebrew idiom: "And all my raiment, I have stained it." The necessity of the verb's being in the past tense seems to have given occasion to the alteration made in the end of the word. The conversive **ו** vau at the beginning of the sentence affects the verb, though not joined to it; of which there are many examples: -

anithani remim umikkarney ומקרני רמים עניתני "And thou wilt hear me (or hear thou me) from among the horns of the unicorns,"

*Psalm 22:22. - L.*

Instead of על בגדי al begadai, upon my garments, one of my ancient MSS. has לארץ larets begadai, to the earth: but this word is partly effaced, and על al written in the margin by a later hand.

### **Verse 5**

**And my fury "And mine indignation"** - For וחמתי vachamathi, nineteen MSS. (three ancient) of Kennicott's, nine of De Rossi's, and one of mine, and four editions, have וצדקתי vetsidkathi, and my righteousness; from Isaiah 59:16, which I suppose the transcriber retained in his memory. It is true that the Versions are in favor of the common reading; but that noticed above seems to stand on good authority, and is a reading both pleasing and impressive. Opposite, in the margin, my MS. has the common reading by a later hand.

### **Verse 6**

**And make them drunk in my fury "And I crushed them in mine indignation"** - For ואשכרם vaashkerem, and I made them drunken, twenty-seven MSS., (three ancient), twelve of De Rossi's, and the old edition of 1488, have ואשברם vaashabberem, and I crushed them: and so the Syriac and Chaldee. The Septuagint have omitted this whole line.

## **63:7-64:12. The remnant's great prayer of intercession**

### **63:7-19. The remnant remembers past deliverances**

### **Verse 7**

**I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord** - The prophet connects the preceding mercies of God to the Jews with the present prospect he has of their redemption by the Messiah; thus making a circle in which eternal goodness revolves. The remaining part of this chapter, with the whole chapter following, contains a penitential confession and supplication of the Israelites in their present state of dispersion, in which they have so long marvellously subsisted, and still continue to subsist, as a people; cast out of their country; without any proper form of civil polity or religious worship, their temple destroyed, their city desolated and lost to them, and their whole nation scattered over the face of the

earth, apparently deserted and cast off by the God of their fathers, as no longer his peculiar people.

They begin with acknowledging God's great mercies and favors to their nation, and the ungrateful returns made to them on their part, that by their disobedience they had forfeited the protection of God, and had caused him to become their adversary. And now the prophet represents them, induced by the memory of the great things that God had done for them, as addressing their humble supplication for the renewal of his mercies. They beseech him to regard them in consideration of his former loving-kindness, they acknowledge him for their Father and Creator, they confess their wickedness and hardness of heart, they entreat his forgiveness, and deplore their present miserable condition under which they have so long suffered. It seems designed as a formulary of humiliation for the Israelites, in order to their conversion.

The whole passage is in the elegiac form, pathetic and elegant; but it has suffered much in our present copy by the mistakes of transcribers.

**The praises of the Lord "The praise of Jehovah"** - For תהלות *tehilloth*, plural, twenty-nine MSS. (three ancient) and two editions, have תהלת *tehillath*, in the singular number; and so the Vulgate renders it; and one of the Greek versions, in the margin of Cod. Marchal. and in the text of MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2: τὴν αἰνεσίν Κυρίου, "the praise of the Lord." - L.

## Verse 8-9

**So he was their Savior. In all their affliction "And he became their Savior in all their distress"** - I have followed the translation of the Septuagint in the latter part of the eighth, and the former part of the ninth verse; which agrees with the present text, a little differently divided as to the members of the sentence. They read מכל *miccol*, out of all, instead of בכל *bechol*, in all, which makes no difference in the sense; and צר *tsar* they understand as ציר *tsir*. Καὶ ἐγενετο αὐτοῖς εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐκ πάσης θλίψεως αὐτῶν· οὐ πρεσβυς, οὐδὲ ἀγγελος. "And he was salvation to them in all their tribulation; neither an ambassador nor an angel, but himself saved them." An angel of his presence means an angel of superior order, in immediate attendance upon God. So the angel of the Lord says to Zacharias, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God," Luke 1:19. The presence of Jehovah, Exodus 33:14, Exodus 33:15, and the angel, Exodus 33:20, Exodus 33:21, is Jehovah himself; here an angel of his presence is opposed to Jehovah himself, as an angel is in the following passages of the same book of Exodus. After their idolatrous worshipping of the golden calf, "when God had said to Moses, I will send an angel before thee - I will not go up in the midst of

thee - the people mourned," Exodus 33:2-4. God afterwards comforts Moses, by saying, "My presence (that is I myself in person, and not by an angel) will go with thee," Exodus 33:14. Αυτος προπορευσομαι σου, "I myself will go before thee," as the Septuagint render it.

The MSS. and editions are much divided between the two readings of the text and margin in the common copies, לא lo, not, and לו lo, to him. All the ancient Versions express the chetib reading, לא lo, not.

"And he bare then and carried them all the days of old

And he took them up, and he bore them, all the days of old"

- See the note on Isaiah 46:3; (note). - L.

### Verse 10

**And he fought against them** - Twenty-six MSS. (ten ancient) and the first edition, with another, add the conjunction ו vau, והוא vehu, and he.

### Verse 11

**Moses and his people "Moses his servant"** - For עמו ammo, his people, two MSS. (one of them ancient) and one of my own, (ancient), and one of De Rossi's, and the old edition of 1488, and the Syriac, read עבדו abdo, his servant. These two words have been mistaken one for the other in other places; Psalm 78:71, and Psalm 80:5, for עמו ammo, his people, and עמך ammecha, thy people, the Septuagint read עבדו abdo, his servant, and עבדך abdecha, thy servant.

**Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where etc. "How he brought them up from the sea, with the shepherd of his flock; how," etc.** - For איה aiyeh, how, interrogative, twice, the Syriac Version reads איך eich, how, without interrogation, as that particle is used in the Syriac language, and sometimes in the Hebrew. See Ruth 3:18; Ecclesiastes 2:16.

**The shepherd of his flock** - That is, Moses. The MSS. and editions vary in this word; some have it רעה roeh, in the singular number; so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee. Others רעי roey, plural, the shepherds. - L.



## Verse 13-14

**That led them through the deep - As a beast goeth down into the valley** - In both these verses there is an allusion to the Israelites going through the Red Sea, in the bottom of which they found no more inconvenience than a horse would in running in the desert, where there was neither stone nor mud; nor a beast in the valley, where all was plain and smooth.

## Verse 14

**The Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest "The Spirit of Jehovah conducted them"** - For תניחנו *tenichennu*, caused him to rest, the Septuagint have ὠδηγησεν αὐτοὺς, conducted them; they read תנחם *tanchem*. The Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate read תנחנו *tanchennu*, conducted him. Two MSS. have the word without the ך *yod* in the middle.

## Verse 15

**And thy strength "And thy mighty power"** - For גבורתיך *geburotheycha*, plural, thirty-two MSS. (seven ancient) and twenty-one of De Rossi's, and seven editions, have גבורתך *geburathecha*, singular.

**Are they restrained?** - For אלי *elai*, from (or in regard to) me, the Septuagint and Syriac read אלינו *eleynu*, from us. - L.

## Verse 16

**Our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting "O deliver us for the sake of thy name"** - The present text reads, as our translation has rendered it, "Our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting." But instead of מעולם *meolam*, from everlasting, an ancient MS. has למען *lemaan*, for the sake of, which gives a much better sense. To show the impropriety of the present reading, it is sufficient to observe, that the Septuagint and Syriac translators thought it necessary to add עלינו *aleynu*, upon us, to make out the sense; That is, "Thy name is upon us, or we are called by thy name, from of old." And the Septuagint have rendered גאלנו *goalenu*, in the imperative mood, ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς, deliver us. - L.

## Verse 17

**Why hast thou made us to err** - A mere Hebraism, for why hast thou permitted us to err. So, Lead us not into temptation; do not suffer us to fall into that to which we are tempted.

## Verse 18

**The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while "It is little that they have taken possession of thy holy mountain"** - The difficulty of the construction in this place is acknowledged on all hands. Vitranga prefers that sense as the least exceptionable which our translation has expressed; in which however there seems to be a great defect; that is, the want of that in the speaker's view must have been the principal part of the proposition, the object of the verb, the land, or it, as our translators supply it, which surely ought to have been expressed, and not to have been left to be supplied by the reader. In a word, I believe there is some mistake in the text; and here the Septuagint help us out; they had in their copy **הר** har, mountain, instead of **עם** am, people, **του ορους του ἁγίου σου**, the mountain of thy Holy One. "Not only have our enemies taken possession of Mount Sion, and trodden down thy sanctuary; even far worse than this has befallen us; thou hast long since utterly cast us off, and dost not consider us as thy peculiar people."

## Chapter 64

### Introduction

The whole of this chapter, which is very pathetic and tender, may be considered as a formulary of prayer and humiliation intended for the Jews in order to their conversion, Isaiah 64:1-12.

### 64:1-4. The remnant beseeches the Lord to assert His power over the nations

#### Verse 1

**O that thou wouldest rend the heavens** - This seems to allude to the wonderful manifestation of God upon Mount Sinai.

#### Verse 2

**As when the melting fire burneth "As the fire kindleth the dry fuel"** - **המסים** hamasim . "It means dry stubble, and the root is **המס** hamas, "says Rabbi Jonah, *apud Sal ben Belec in loc.* Which is approved by Schultens, Orig. Hebrews p. 30.

"The fire kindling the stubble does not seem like enough to the melting of the mountains to be brought as a simile to it. What if thus? -

'That the mountains might flow down at thy presence!

As the fire of things smelted burneth,

As the fire causeth the waters to boil - '

There is no doubt of the Hebrew words of the second line bearing that version."  
- Dr. Jubb.

I submit these different interpretations to the reader's judgment. For my own part I am inclined to think that the text is much corrupted in this place. The ancient Versions have not the least traces of either of the above interpretations. The Septuagint and Syriac agree exactly together in rendering this line by, "As the wax melted before the fire," which can by no means be reconciled with the present text. The Vulgate, for המסים hamasim, read ימסו yemasu .

**That the nations** - For גוים goyim, the nations, four MSS. (one of them ancient) have הרים harim, the mountains. - L.

#### Verse 4

**For since the beginning of the world men have not heard "For never have men heard"** - St. Paul is generally supposed to have quoted this passage of Isaiah, 1 Corinthians 2:9; and Clemens Romanus in his first epistle has made the same quotation, very nearly in the same words with the apostle. But the citation is so very different both from the Hebrew text and the version of the Septuagint, that it seems very difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile them by any literal emendation, without going beyond the bounds of temperate criticism. One clause, "neither hath it entered into the heart of man," (which, by the way, is a phrase purely Hebrew, עלה על לב alah al leb, and should seem to belong to the prophet), is wholly left out; and another is repeated without force or propriety; viz., "nor perceived by the ear," after, "never have heard:" and the sense and expression of the apostle is far preferable to that of the Hebrew text. Under these difficulties I am at a loss what to do better, than to offer to the reader this, perhaps disagreeable, alternative: either to consider the Hebrew text and Septuagint in this place as wilfully disguised and corrupted by the Jews; of which practice in regard to other quotations in the New Testament from the Old, they lie under strong suspicions, (see Dr. Owen on the version of the Septuagint, sect. vi. ix.); or to look upon St. Paul's quotation as not made from Isaiah, but from one or other of the two apocryphal books, entitled, The Ascension of Esaiiah, and the Apocalypse of Elias, in both of which this passage was found; and the apostle is by some supposed in other places to have quoted such

apocryphal writings. As the first of these conclusions will perhaps not easily be admitted by many, so I must fairly warn my readers that the second is treated by Jerome as little better than heresy. See his comment on this place of Isaiah. - L. I would read the whole verse thus; "Yea, from the time of old they have not heard, they have not hearkened to, an eye hath not seen a God besides thee. He shall work for that one that waiteth for him." This I really think on the whole to be the best translation of the original.

The variations on this place are as follows: for שמעו shameu, they have heard, a MS. and the Septuagint read שמענו shamanu, we have heard: for the second לא lo, not, sixty-nine MSS. and four editions have ולא velo, and not, and the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate. And so ועין veayin, and eye, Septuagint and Syriac. את eth, the, (emphatic), is added before אלהים Elohim, God, in MS. Bodleian. למחכי limechakkey, to them that wait, plural, two MSS. and all the ancient Versions.

## **64:5-7. The penitent confession of the believing remnant**

### **Verse 5**

**Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness "Thou meetest with joy those who work righteousness"** - The Syriac reads פוגע אתה שש בעשי poga attah shesh baashi, as above.

**In those is continuance, and we shall be saved "Because of our deeds, for we have been rebellious"** - בהם עולם ונושע bahem olam venivvashea . I am fully persuaded that these words as they stand in the present Hebrew text are utterly unintelligible; there is no doubt of the meaning of each word separately; but put together they make no sense at all. I conclude, therefore, that the copy has suffered by mistakes of transcribers in this place. The corruption is of long standing, for the ancient interpreters were as much at a loss for the meaning as the moderns, and give nothing satisfactory. The Septuagint render these words by δια τουτο επλανηθημεν, therefore we have erred: they seem to have read נפשע עליהם aleyhem niphsha, without helping the sense. In this difficulty what remains but to have recourse to conjecture? Archbishop Secker was dissatisfied with the present reading: he proposed הבט עלינו ונושע hebet aleynu venivvashea ; "look upon us, and we shall, or that we may, be saved:" which gives a very good sense, but seems to have no sufficient foundation. Besides, the word ונושע venivvashea, which is attended with great difficulties, seems to be corrupted as well as the two preceding; and the true reading of it is, I think, given by the Septuagint, ונפשע veniphsha, επλανηθημεν, we have erred, (so they render the verb פשע pasha, Isaiah 46:8, and Ezekiel 23:12;), parallel to טאונה vannecheta, ἡμαρτομεν, we have sinned. For בהם עולם bahem olam, which means nothing, I

would propose המעללינו hammaaleleynu, "because of our deeds;" which I presume was first altered to במעלליהם bemaaleleyhem, an easy and common mistake of the third person plural of the pronoun for the first, (see note on Isaiah 33:2;), and then with some farther alteration to בהם עולם behem olam . The עליהם aleyhem, which the Septuagint probably found in their copy, seems to be a remnant of במעלליהם bemaaleleyhem .

This, it may be said, is imposing your sense upon the prophet. It may be so; for perhaps these may not be the very words of the prophet: but however it is better than to impose upon him what makes no sense at all; as they generally do, who pretend to render such corrupted passages. For instance, our own translators: "in those is continuance, and we shall be saved:" in those in whom, or what? There is no antecedent to the relative. "In the ways of God," say some: "with our fathers," says Vitringa, joining it in construction with the verb, קעפּת katsaphta, "thou hast been angry with them, our fathers;" and putting ונהטא vannecheta, "for we have sinned," in a parenthesis. But there has not been any mention of our fathers: and the whole sentence, thus disposed, is utterly discordant from the Hebrew idiom and construction. In those is continuance; עולם olam means a destined but hidden and unknown portion of time; but cannot mean continuation of time, or continuance, as it is here rendered. Such forced interpretations are equally conjectural with the boldest critical emendation; and generally have this farther disadvantage, that they are altogether unworthy of the sacred writers. - L.

Coverdale renders the passage thus: -

But lo, thou art angrie, for we offende, and have been ever in synne; and there is not one whole.

This is, I am afraid, making a sense.

After all that this very learned prelate has done to reduce these words to sense and meaning, I am afraid we are still far from the prophet's mind. Probably בהם bahem, in them, refers to דרכיך deracheycha, thy ways, above. עולם olam may be rendered of old, or during the whole of the Jewish economy; and ונושע venivvashea, "and shall we be saved?" Thus: - Thou art wroth, for we have sinned in them (thy ways) of old; and can we be saved? For we are all as an unclean thing, etc.

## Verse 6

**As filthy rags** - עדים iddim . Rab. Mosheh ben Maimon *interpretatur* עדים iddim, *vestes quibus mulier se abstergit post congressum cum marito suo. Alii pannus*

*menstruatus. Alii panni mulieris parientis.* - And we ben made as unclene alle we: and as the cloth of the woman rooten blode flowing, all our rigtwisnesses. - Old MS. Bible. If preachers knew properly the meaning of this word, would they make such a liberal use of it in their public ministry? And why should any use a word, the meaning of which he does not understand? How many in the congregation blush for the incautious man and his "filthy rags!"

### Verse 7

**There is none** - Twelve MSS. have אין *ein*, without the conjunction ו *vau* prefixed; and so read the Chaldee and Vulgate.

**And hast consumed us because of our iniquities "And hast delivered us up into the hands of our iniquities"** - For ותמוגנו *vattemugenu*, "hast dissolved us," the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee had in their copies תמגננו *temaggenenu*, "hast delivered us up." Houbigant. Secker.

### 64:8-12. The appeal for pardon and restoration

#### Verse 8

**But, now, O Lord, thou art our Father "But thou, O Jehovah, thou art our Father"** - For ועתה *veattah*, and now, five MSS., one of them ancient, and the two oldest editions, 1486 and 1488, have ואתה *veattah*, and thou, and so the Chaldee seems to have read. The repetition has great force. The other word may be well spared. "But now, O Lord, thou art our Father." How very affectionate is the complaint in this and the following verses! But how does the distress increase, when they recollect the desolations of the temple, and ruin of public worship, Isaiah 64:11; : "Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt up with fire," etc.

**We all are the work of thy hand** - Three MSS. (two of them ancient) and the Septuagint read מעשה *maaseh*, the work, without the conjunction ו *vau* prefixed. And for ידך *yadecha*, thy hand, the Bodleian, and two others MSS., the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read ידיך *yadeycha*, thy hands, in the plural number. - L.

#### Verse 9

**Neither remember iniquity** - For לעד תזכר *laad tizcor*, one of my MSS. has לעד תקצר *laad tiktsoph*, "be not angry," as in the preceding clause. This has been



partially obliterated, and תִּזְכֹּר tizcor, written in the margin by a later hand: but this MS. abounds with words of this kind, all altered by later hands.



*Egyptian model of oxen ploughing*

## **Chapter 65**

### **65. The Lord's answer – His mercy reserved for the remnant**

#### **Introduction**

We have here a vindication of God's dealings with the Jews, Isaiah 65:1, Isaiah 65:2. To this end the prophet points out their great hypocrisy, and gives a particular enumeration of their dreadful abominations, many of which were committed under the specious guise of sanctity, Isaiah 65:3-5. For their horrid impieties, (recorded in writing before Jehovah), the wrath of God shall certainly come upon them to the uttermost; a prediction which was exactly fulfilled in the first and second centuries in the reigns of the Roman emperors Vespasian, Titus, and Hadrian, when the whole Jewish polity was dissolved, and the people dispersed all over the world, Isaiah 65:6, Isaiah 65:7. Though God had rejected the Jews, and called the Gentiles, who sought him not, ( Romans 9:24-26;), yet a remnant from among the former shall be preserved, to whom he will in due time make good all his promises, Isaiah 65:8-10. Denunciation of Divine vengeance against those idolaters who set in order a table for Gad, and fill out a libation to



Meni, ancient idolatries, which, from the context, and from the chronological order of the events predicted, have a plain reference to the idolatries practiced by Antichrist under the guise of Christianity, Isaiah 65:11, Isaiah 65:12. Dreadful fate which awaits these gross idolaters beautifully contrasted with the great blessedness reserved for the righteous, Isaiah 65:13-16. Future restoration of the posterity of Jacob, and the happy state of the world in general from that most glorious epoch, represented by the strong figure of the creation of new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, and into which no distress shall be permitted to enter, Isaiah 65:17-19. In this new state of things the term of human life shall be greatly protracted, and shall possess none of that uncertainty which attaches to it in "the heavens and the earth which are now." This is elegantly illustrated by the longevity of a tree; manifestly alluding to the oak or cedar of Lebanon, some individuals of which are known to have lived from seven to ten centuries, Isaiah 65:20-23. Beautiful figures shadowing forth the profound peace and harmony of the Church of Jesus Christ, which shall immediately follow the total overthrow of Antichrist; with a most gracious promise that the great chain of Omnipotence shall be put upon every adversary, so that none will be able any longer to hurt and destroy in all God's holy mountain, Isaiah 65:24, Isaiah 65:25.

This chapter contains a defense of God's proceedings in regard to the Jews, with reference to their complaint in the chapter preceding. God is introduced declaring that he had called the Gentiles, though they had not sought him; and had rejected his own people for their refusal to attend to his repeated call; for their obstinate disobedience, their idolatrous practices, and detestable hypocrisy. That nevertheless he would not destroy them all; but would preserve a remnant, to whom he would make good his ancient promises. Severe punishments are threatened to the apostates; and great rewards are promised to the obedient in a future flourishing state of the Church.

## **Verses 1-7. The sins of latter-day apostate Israel**

### **Verse 1**

**I am sought of them that asked not for me "I am made known to those that asked not for me"** - נִדְרַשְׁתִּי nidrashti, εμφανης εγενομην, the Septuagint, Alexandrian, and St. Paul, Romans 10:20; who has however inverted the order of the phrases, εμφανης εγενομην, "I was made manifest, "and ευρεδην, "I was found, "from that which they have in the Septuagint. נִדְרַשְׁתִּי nidrashti means, "I am sought so as to be found." Vitranga. If this be the true meaning of the word, then שָׁאֱלוּ shaalu, "that asked," which follows, should seem defective, the verb wanting its object: but two MSS., one of them ancient, have שְׁאֱלוּנִי shealuni,

"asked me;" and another MS. שאלו לי shealu li, "asked for me;" one or other of which seems to be right. But Cocceius in Lex., and Vitranga in his translation, render נדרשתי nidrashti, by "I have answered;" and so the verb is rendered by all the ancient Versions in Ezekiel 20:3, Ezekiel 20:31. If this be right, the translation will be, "I have answered those that asked not." I leave this to the reader's judgment; but have followed in my translation the Septuagint and St. Paul, and the MSS. above mentioned. בקשני bikeshuni is written regularly and fully in above a hundred MSS. and in the oldest edition, בקשוני bikeshuni . - L.

### Verse 3

**That sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick**  
**"Sacrificing in the gardens, and burning incense on the tiles"** - These are instances of heathenish superstition, and idolatrous practices, to which the Jews were immoderately addicted before the Babylonish captivity. The heathen worshipped their idols in groves; whereas God, in opposition to this species of idolatry, commanded his people, when they should come into the promised land, to destroy all the places wherein the Canaanites had served their gods, and in particular to burn their groves with fire, Deuteronomy 12:2, Deuteronomy 12:3. These apostate Jews sacrificed upon altars built of bricks; in opposition to the command of God in regard to his altar, which was to be of unhewn stone, Exodus 20:26. *Et pro uno altari, quod impolitis lapidibus Dei erat lege constructum, coctos lateres et agrorum cespites hostiarum sanguine cruentabant.* "And instead of one altar which, according to the law of God, was, to be constructed of unhewn stones, they stained the bricks and turfs of the fields with the blood of their victims." Hieron. in loc. Or it means, perhaps, that they sacrificed upon the roofs of their houses, which were always flat, and paved with brick, or tile, or plaster of terrace. An instance of this idolatrous practice we find in 2 Kings 23:12, where it is said that Josiah "beat down the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made." See also Zephaniah 1:5. Sir John Chardin's MS. note on this place of Isaiah is as follows: *"Ainsi font tous les Gentiles, sur les lieux eleves, et sur les terrasses, appelez latcres, pareeque sont faits de briq."* "Who dwell in the sepulchres, and lodge in the caverns," for the purposes of necromancy and divination; to obtain dreams and revelations. Another instance of heathenish superstition: so Virgil: -

*Huc dona sacerdos*

*Cum tulit, et caesarum ovium sub nocte silenti*

*Pellibus incubuit stratis, somnosque petivit:*

*Multa modis simulacra videt volitantia miris,  
Et varias audit voces, fruiturque deorum  
Colloquio, atque imis Acheronta affatur Avernis.*

*Aen. 7:86. -*

"Here in distress the Italian nations come,  
Anxious, to clear their doubts, and learn their doom.  
First, on the fleeces of the slaughtered sheep,  
By night the sacred priest dissolves in sleep:  
When in a train, before his slumbering eye,  
Thin airy forms and wondrous visions fly.  
He calls the powers who guard the infernal floods,  
And talks inspired, familiar with the gods."

*Pitt.*

There was a practice exactly like this which prevailed among the Highlanders of Scotland; an authentic account of this is given by Sir Walter Scott, in a note on his poem called *The Lady of the Lake*. It is as follows: -

"The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the Taghairm, mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly-slain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed; and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits who haunt these desolate recesses. In some of the Hebrides, they attributed the same oracular power to a large black stone by the sea-shore, which they approached with certain solemnities; and considered the first fancy which came into their own minds after they did so, to be the undoubted dictate of the tutelar deity of the stone; and as such to be, if possible, punctually complied with. Martin has

recorded the following curious modes of Highland augury, in which the Taghairm, and its effects upon the person who was subjected to it, may serve to illustrate the text.

"It was an ordinary thing among the over-curious to consult an invisible oracle concerning the fate of families and battles, etc. This was performed three different ways; the first was by a company of men, one of whom, being detached by lot, was afterwards carried to a river, which was the boundary between two villages. Four of the company laid hold on him; and, having shut his eyes, they took him by the legs and arms, and then, tossing him to and again, struck his hips with force against the bank. One of them cried out, What is it you have got here? Another answers, A log of birch-wood. The other cries again, Let his invisible friends appear from all quarters, and let them relieve him by giving an answer to our present demands; and in a few minutes after, a number of little creatures came from the sea, who answered the question, and disappeared suddenly. The man was then set at liberty; and they all returned home, to take their measures according to the prediction of their false prophets; but the poor deluded fools were abused, for the answer was still ambiguous. This was always practiced in the night, and may literally be called the works of darkness.

"I had an account from the most intelligent and judicious men in the Isle of Skie, that, about sixty-two years ago, the oracle was thus consulted only once, and that was in the parish of Kilmartin, on the east side, by a wicked and mischievous race of people, who are now extinguished, both root and branch.

"The second way of consulting the oracle was by a party of men, who first retired to solitary places, remote from any house; and there they singled out one of their number, and wrapt him in a big cow's hide, which they folded about him. His whole body was covered with it, except his head, and so left in this posture all night, until his invisible friends relieved him, by giving a proper answer to the question in hand; which he received, as he fancied, from several persons that he found about him all that time. His consorts returned to him at the break of day, and then he communicated his news to them; which often proved fatal to those concerned in such unwarrantable inquiries.

"There was a third way of consulting, which was a confirmation of the second above mentioned. The same company who put the man into the hide took a live cat, and put him on a spit. One of the number was employed to turn the spit, and one of his consorts inquired of him, What are you doing? He answered, I roast this cat until his friends answer the question; which must be the same that was proposed by the man shut up in the hide. And afterwards, a very big cat (in allusion to the story of 'the King of the Cats,' in Lord Lyttleton's Letters, and

well known in the Highlands as a nursery tale) comes, attended by a number of lesser cats, desiring to relieve the cat turned upon the spit, and then answers the question. If this answer proved the same that was given to the man in the hide, then it was taken as a confirmation of the other, which, in this case, was believed infallible.

"Mr. Alexander Cooper, present minister of North-Vist, told me that one John Erach, in the Isle of Lewis, assured him it was his fate to have been led by his curiosity with some who consulted this oracle, and that he was a night within the hide, as above-mentioned; during which time he felt and heard such terrible things, that he could not express them. The impression it made on him was such as could never go off; and he said for a thousand worlds he would never again be concerned in the like performance, for this had disordered him to a high degree. He confessed it ingenuously, and with an air of great remorse; and seemed to be very penitent under a just sense of so great a crime. He declared this about five years since, and is still living in the Lewis for any thing I know." - Description of the Western Isles p. 110. See also Pennant's Scottish Tour, vol. 2 p. 361.

#### **Verse 4**

**Which remain among the graves** - "For the purpose of evoking the dead. They lodged in desert places that demons might appear to them; for demons do appear in such places, to those who do believe in them." - Kimchi.

**In the monuments "In the caverns"** - בנצורים bannetsurim, a word of doubtful signification. An ancient MS. has בצורים batstsurim, another בצרים batstsurim, "in the rocks;" and Le Clec thinks the Septuagint had it so in their copy. They render it by εν τοις στηλαισις, "in the caves."

**Which eat swine's flesh** - This was expressly forbidden by the law, Leviticus 11:7, but among the heathen was in principal request in their sacrifices and feasts. Antiochus Epiphanes compelled the Jews to eat swine's flesh, as a full proof of their renouncing their religion, 2 Maccabees 6:18 and 7:1. "And the broth of abominable meats," for lustrations, magical arts, and other superstitious and abominable practices.

**In their vessels** - כליהם keleyhem, a MS. had at first בכליהם bichleyhem . So the Vulgate and Chaldee, (and the preposition seems necessary to the sense), "in their vessels."

## Verse 5

**For I am holier than thou** - So the Chaldee renders it.

קדשתיך kedashticha is the same with קדשתי ממך kadashti mimmecha . In the same manner חזקתני chazaktani, Jeremiah 20:7, is used for חזקת ממני chazakta mimmenni, "thou art stronger than I." - L.

## Verse 6

**Behold, it is written before me** - Their sin is registered in heaven, calling aloud for the punishment due to it.

**I will - recompense into their bosom** - The bosom is the place where the Asiatics have their pockets, and not in their skirts like the inhabitants of the west. Their loose flowing garments have scarcely any thing analogous to skirts.

**Into their bosom** - For אל al, ten MSS. and five editions have אל el . So again at the end of this verse, seventeen MSS. and four editions have אל al .

## Verse 7

**Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers "Their iniquities, and the iniquities of their fathers"** - For the pronoun affixed of the second person חם chem, your, twice, read חם hem, their, in the third person; with the Septuagint and Houbigant.

## Verses 8-10. The election and blessing of the righteous remnant

### Verse 8

**A blessing is in it** - The Hebrews call all things which serve for food ברכה berachah, "a blessing." On this verse Kimchi remarks: "As the cluster of grapes contains, besides the juice, the bark, and the kernels, so the Israelites have, besides the just, sinners among them. Now as the cluster must not be destroyed because there is a blessing, a nutritive part in it; so Israel shall not be destroyed, because there are righteous persons in it. But as the bark and kernels are thrown away, when the wine is pressed out, so shall the sinners be purged away from among the just, and on their return from exile, shall not be permitted to enter into the land of Israel;" Ezekiel 20:38.

**For my servant's sakes "For the sake of my servant"** - It is to be observed that one of the Koningsburg MSS. collated by Lilienthal points the word עבדי

abdi, singular; that is, "my servant," meaning the Messiah; and so read the Septuagint, which gives a very good sense. In two of my old MSS. it is pointed עבדי abadi, and עבדי abdi, "my servant," this confirms the above reading.

## Verse 9

**An inheritor of my mountains "An inheritor of my mountain" - הרי hari**, in the singular number; so the Septuagint and Syriac; that is, of Mount Sion. See Isaiah 65:11; and Isaiah 56:7, to which Sion, the pronoun feminine singular, added to the verb in the next line, refers; ירשואה yereshuah, "shall inherit her." - L.

## Verse 10

**Sharon - and the valley of Achor** - Two of the most fertile parts of Judea; famous for their rich pastures; the former to the west, not far from Joppa; the latter north of Jericho, near Gilgal.

## Verses 11-12. The judgment of latter-day apostate Israel

### Verse 11

**That prepare a table for that troop "Who set in order a table for Gad" -** The disquisitions and conjectures of the learned concerning Gad and Meni are infinite and uncertain: perhaps the most probable may be, that Gad means good fortune, and Meni the moon. "But why should we be solicitous about it?" says Schmidius. "It appears sufficiently, from the circumstances, that they were false gods; either stars, or some natural objects; or a mere fiction. The Holy Scriptures did not deign to explain more clearly what these objects of idolatrous worship were; but chose rather, that the memory of the knowledge of them should be utterly abolished. And God be praised, that they are so totally abolished, that we are now quite at a loss to know what and what sort of things they were." Schmidius on the place, and on Judges 2:13, Bibl. Hallensia.

Jerome, on the place, gives an account of this idolatrous practice of the apostate Jews, of making a feast, or a *lectisternium*, as the Romans called it, for these pretended deities. *Est in cunctis urbibus, et maxime in Aegypto, et in Alexandria, idololatriae vetus consuetudo, ut ultimo die anni, et mensis ejus qui extremus est, ponant mensam refertam varii generis epulis, et poculum mulso mixtum; vel praeteriti anni vel futuri fertilitatem auspicantes. Hoc autem faciebant et Israelitae, omnium simulachrorum portenta venerantes; et nequaquam altari victimas, sed hujusmodi mensae liba fundebant.* "In all cities, and especially in Egypt and Alexandria, it was an ancient idolatrous custom on the last day of the



year, to spread a table covered with various kinds of viands, and a goblet mixed with new wine, referring to the fertility either of the past or coming year. The Israelites did the same, worshipping all kinds of images, and pouring out libations on such tables," etc. See also Le Clerc on the place; and on Isaiah 66:17, and Dav. Millii Dissert. v.

The allusion to Meni, which signifies number, is obvious. If there had been the like allusion to Gad, which might have been expected, it might perhaps have helped to let us into the meaning of that word. It appears from Jerome's version of this place, that the words τῷ δαιμονίῳ, to a demon, (or δαιμονί, as some copies have it), and τῇ τύχῃ, to fortune, stood in his time in the Greek version in an inverted order from that which they have in the present copies; the latter then answering to גַּד gad, the former to מְנִי meni : by which some difficulty would be avoided; for it is commonly supposed that גַּד gad signifies τύχη, Fortune. See Genesis 30:11, apud Sept. This matter is so far well cleared up by MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. II., which agree in placing these two words in that order, which Jerome's version supposes. - L.

My Old MS. Bible translates: That putten the borde of fortune; and offreden licours upon it; and so the Vulgate.

Ἐτοιμαζοντες τῷ δαιμονίῳ τραπεζαν, και πληρουντες τῇ τύχῃ κερασμα. Preparing a table for the demon, and filling up, or pouring out, a libation to fortune."

*Septuagint.*

Ye have set up an aulter unto fortune

And geven rich drink offeringes unto treasure.

Coverdale.

## Verse 12

**Therefore will I number you** - Referring to Meni, which signifies number "Rabbi Eliezar said to his disciples, Turn to God one day before you die. His disciples said, How call a man know the day of his death? He answered, Therefore it is necessary that you should turn to God to-day, for possibly ye may die to-morrow."

## **Verses 13-16. The blessings of the remnant vs. the curses of apostate Israel**

### **Verse 13**

**My servants shalt eat, but ye shall be hungry** - Rabbi Joachan ben Zachai said in a parable: There was a king who invited his servants, but set them no time to come to the feast. The prudent and wary who were among them adorned themselves; and, standing at the gate of the king's house, said, Is there any thing lacking in the king's house? i.e., Is there any work to be done in it? But the foolish which were among them went, and mocking said, When shall the feast be, in which there is no labor? Suddenly, the king sought out his servants: they who were adorned entered in, and they who were still polluted entered in also. The king was glad when he met the prudent, but he was angry when he met the foolish. Therefore he said, Let those sit down, and let them eat; but let these stand and look on.

This parable is very like that of the wise and foolish virgins, Matthew 25, and that of the marriage of the king's son, Matthew 22.

### **Verse 15**

**Shall slay thee "Shall slay you"** - For והמיתהך vehemithecha, shall slay thee, the Septuagint and Chaldee read והמיתכם vehemithechem, shall slay you, plural.

## **Verses 17-25. The glories and blessings in store for God's own**

### **Verse 17**

**I create new heavens and a new earth** - This has been variously understood. Some Jews and some Christians understand it literally. God shall change the state of the atmosphere, and render the earth more fruitful. Some refer it to what they call the Millennium; others, to a glorious state of religion; others, to the re-creation of the earth after it shall have been destroyed by fire. I think it refers to the full conversion of the Jews ultimately; and primarily to the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity.

### **Verse 18**

**Rejoice for ever in that which I create "Exult in the age to come which I create"** - So in Isaiah 9:5; עַד אָבִי אֲדָם abi ad, πατήρ του μελλοντος αιωνος, "the father of the age to come," Sept. See Bishop Chandler, Defence of Christianity, p. 136.

## Verse 19

**The voice of weeping, etc.** - "Because of untimely deaths shall no more be heard in thee; for natural death shall not happen till men be full of days; as it is written, Isaiah 65:20; : There shall be no more thence an infant of days, i.e., the people shall live to three or five hundred years of age, as in the days of the patriarchs; and if one die at one hundred years, it is because of his sin; and even at that age he shall be reputed an infant; and they shall say of him, An infant is dead. These things shall happen to Israel in the days of the Messiah." - Kimchi.

## Verse 20

**Thence "There"** - For מִשָּׁם mishsham, thence, the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, read שָׁם sham, there.

## Verse 22

**They shall not build, and another inhabit** - The reverse of the curse denounced on the disobedient, Deuteronomy 28:30; : "Thou shalt build a house, and thou shalt not dwell therein; thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof."

**For as the days of a tree** - It is commonly supposed that the oak, one of the most longlived of the trees, lasts about a thousand years; being five hundred years growing to full perfection, and as many decaying: which seems to be a moderate and probable computation. See Evelyn, *Sylva*, B. 3 chap. 3. The present emperor of China, in his very ingenious and sensible poem entitled *Eloge de Moukden*, a translation of which in French was published at Paris, 1770, speaks of a tree in his country which lives more than a hundred ages: and another, which after fourscore ages is only in its prime, pp. 37, 38. But his imperial majesty's commentators, in their note on the place, carry the matter much farther; and quote authority, which affirms, that the tree last mentioned by the emperor, the immortal tree, after having lived ten thousand years, is still only in its prime. I suspect that the Chinese enlarge somewhat in their national chronology, as well as in that of their trees. See Chou King. Preface, by Mons. de Guignes. The prophet's idea seems to be, that they shall live to the age of the antediluvians; which seems to be very justly expressed by the days of a tree, according to our notions. The rabbins have said that this refers to the tree of life, which endures five hundred years.

## Verse 23

**They shall not labor in vain "My chosen shall not labor in vain"** - I remove בחירי bechirai, my elect, from the end of the twenty-second to the beginning of the twenty-third verse, on the authority of the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, and a MS.; contrary to the division in the Masoretic text. - L. The Septuagint is beautiful: My chosen shall not labor in vain, neither shall they beget children for the curse; for the seed is blessed of the Lord, and their posterity with them."

**Nor bring forth for trouble "Neither shall they generate a short-lived race"** - לבהלה labbehalah, *in festinationem*, "what shall soon hasten away." Εἰς καταραν for a curse, Sept. They seem to have read לאלה lealah . - Grotius. But Psalm 78:33; both justifies and explains the word here: -

וּשְׁנוֹתָם בַּבְּהִלָּה וַיַּעַח בָּהֶם בְּהִבָּל וַיִּכַּל  
ushenotham

"And he consumed their days in vanity;

And their years in haste."

μετα σπουδης, say the Septuagint. Jerome on this place of Isaiah explains it to the same purpose: "εἰς ἀνυπαρξίαν, *hoc est, ut esse desistant*."

11235 23 65 24 24

**Before they call, I will answer** - I will give them all they crave for, and more than they can desire.

## Verse 24

**Before they call, I will answer** - I will give them all they crave for, and more than they can desire.

## Verse 25

**The wolf and the lamb, etc.** - The glorious salvation which Jesus Christ procures is for men, and for men only: fallen spirits must still abide under the curse: "He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham."

**Shall feed together** - For כֶּעָדֹךָ keechad, as one, an ancient MS. has יַחְדָּו yachdav, together; the usual word, to the same sense, but very different in the letters. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate seem to agree with the MSS.

## **Chapter 66**

### **Synoptic finale; the entire prophesy in retrospect**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter treats of the same subject with the foregoing. God, by his prophet, tells the Jews, who valued themselves much on their temple and pompous worship, that the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; and that no outward rites of worship, while the worshippers are idolatrous and impure, can please him who looketh at the heart, Isaiah 66:1-3. This leads to a threatening of vengeance for their guilt, alluding to their making void the law of God by their abominable traditions, their rejection of Christ, persecution of his followers, and consequent destruction by the Romans. But as the Jewish ritual and people shadow forth the system of Christianity and its professors; so, in the prophetic writings, the idolatries of the Jews are frequently put for the idolatries afterwards practiced by those bearing the Christian name. Consequently, if we would have the plenitude of meaning in this section of prophecy, which the very content requires, we must look through the type into the antitype, viz., the very gross idolatries practiced by the members of Antichrist, the pompous heap of human intentions and traditions with which they have encumbered the Christian system, their most dreadful persecution of Christ's spiritual and true worshippers, and the awful judgments which shall overtake them in the great and terrible day of the Lord, Isaiah 66:4-6. The mighty and sudden increase of the Church of Jesus Christ at the period of Antichrist's fall represented by the very strong figure of Sion being delivered of a man-child before the time of her travail, the meaning of which symbol the prophet immediately subjoins in a series of interrogations for the sake of greater force and emphasis, Isaiah 66:7-9. Wonderful prosperity and unspeakable blessedness of the world when the posterity of Jacob, with the fullness of the Gentiles, shall be assembled to Messiah's standard, Isaiah 66:10-14. All the wicked of the earth shall be gathered together to the battle of that great day of God Almighty, and the slain of Jehovah shall be many, Isaiah 66:15-18. Manner of the future restoration of the Israelites from their several dispersions throughout the habitable globe, Isaiah 66:19-21. Perpetuity of this new economy of grace to the house of Israel, Isaiah 66:22. Righteousness shall be universally diffused in the earth; and the memory of those who have transgressed against the Lord shall be had in continual abhorrence, Isaiah 66:23, Isaiah 66:24. Thus this great prophet, after tracing the principal events of time, seems at length to have terminated his views in eternity, where all revolutions cease, where the blessedness of the righteous shall be unchangeable as the new heavens, and the misery of the wicked as the fire that shall not be quenched.

This chapter is a continuation of the subject of the foregoing. The Jews valued themselves much upon their temple, and the pompous system of services performed in it, which they supposed were to be of perpetual duration; and they assumed great confidence and merit to themselves for their strict observance of all the externals of their religion. And at the very time when the judgments denounced in Isaiah 65:6; and Isaiah 65:12; of the preceding chapter were hanging over their heads, they were rebuilding, by Herod's munificence, the temple in a most magnificent manner. God admonishes them, that "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands;" and that a mere external worship, how diligently soever attended, when accompanied with wicked and idolatrous practices in the worshippers, would never be accepted by him. This their hypocrisy is set forth in strong colors, which brings the prophet again to the subject of the former chapter; and he pursues it in a different manner, with more express declaration of the new economy, and of the flourishing state of the Church under it. The increase of the Church is to be sudden and astonishing. They that escape of the Jews, that is, that become converts to the Christian faith, are to be employed in the Divine mission to the Gentiles, and are to act as priests in presenting the Gentiles as an offering to God; see Romans 15:16. And both, now collected into one body, shall be witnesses of the final perdition of the obstinate and irreclaimable.

These two chapters manifestly relate to the calling of the Gentiles, the establishment of the Christian dispensation, and the reprobation of the apostate Jews, and their destruction executed by the Romans. - L.

### **Verses 1-4. Wicked worship of age-end apostate Israel**

#### **Verse 2**

**And all those things have been "And all these things are mine"** - A word absolutely necessary to the sense is here lost out of the text: לִי li, mine. It is preserved by the Septuagint and Syriac.

#### **Verse 3**

**He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man "He that slayeth an ox killeth a man"** - These are instances of wickedness joined with hypocrisy; of the most flagitious crimes committed by those who at the same time affected great strictness in the performance of all the external services of religion. God, by the Prophet Ezekiel, upbraids the Jews with the same practices: "When they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it," Ezekiel 23:39. Of the same kind was the hypocrisy of the

Pharisees in our Savior's time:" who devoured widows' houses, and for a pretense made long prayers," Matthew 23:14.

The generality of interpreters, by departing from the literal rendering of the text, have totally lost the true sense of it, and have substituted in its place what makes no good sense at all; for it is not easy to show how, in any circumstances, sacrifice and murder, the presenting of legal offerings and idolatrous worship, can possibly be of the same account in the sight of God.

**He that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood "That maketh an oblation offereth swine's blood"** - A word here likewise, necessary to complete the sense, is perhaps irrecoverably lost out of the text. The Vulgate and Chaldee add the word offereth, to make out the sense; not, as I imagine, from any different reading, (for the word wanted seems to have been lost before the time of the oldest of them as the Septuagint had it not in their copy,; but from mere necessity.

Le Clerc thinks that מעלה maaleh is to be repeated from the beginning of this member; but that is not the case in the parallel members, which have another and a different verb in the second place, "דם dam, *sic Versiones; putarem tamen legendum participium aliquod, et quidem* חזב zabach, *cum sequatur* ח cheth, *nisi jam praecesserat.*" - Secker. Houbigant supplies אכל achal, eateth. After all, I think the most probable word is that which the Chaldee and Vulgate seem to have designed to represent; that is, מקריב makrib, offereth.

**In their abominations** - ובשקוציהם ubeshikkutseyhem, "and in their abominations;" two copies of the Machazor, and one of Kennicott's MSS. have ובגלוליהם ubegilluleyhem, "and in their idols." So the Vulgate and Syriac.

## **Verse 5. The remnant persecuted and encouraged**

### **Verse 5**

**Your brethren that hated you - said "Say ye to your brethren that hate you"** - The Syriac reads אמרו לאחיכם imru laacheychem ; and so the Septuagint, Edit. Comp. εἶπατε ἀδελφοῖς ὑμῶν and MS. Marchal. has ἀδελφοῖς and so Cyril and Procopius read and explain it. It is not easy to make sense of the reading of the Septuagint in the other editions; εἶπατε ἀδελφοὶ ἡμῶν τοῖς μισοῦσιν ὑμᾶς but for ἡμῶν, our, MS. 1. D. 2 also has ὑμῶν, your.

## **Verse 6 The coming of the Lord**

### **Verse 6**



## **A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord -**

It is very remarkable that similar words were spoken by Jesus, son of Ananias, previously to the destruction of Jerusalem. See his very affecting history related by Josephus, War, B. vi., chap. v.

## **Verses 7-9. Israel's national rebirth**

### **Verse 8**

**Who hath seen "And who hath seen"** - Twenty MSS., (four ancient), of Kennicott's, and twenty-nine of De Rossi's, and two ancient of my own, and the two oldest editions, with two others, have וּמִי umi, adding the conjunction וּ vau ; and so read all the ancient versions. And who hath seen?

### **Verse 9**

**Shall I bring to the birth** - הָאֲנִי אֲשַׁבֵּיר haani ashbir, *num ego matricem frangam*; Montanus. The word means that which immediately precedes the appearance of the fetus - the breaking forth of the liquor *amni*. This also is an expression that should be studiously avoided in prayers and sermons.

## **Verses 10-14. Jerusalem's millennial glory and exaltation**

### **Verse 11**

**With the abundance of her glory "From her abundant stores"** - For מִזִּיז mizziz, from the splendor, two MSS. and the old edition of 1488, have מִזִּי mizziv ; and the latter ז zain is upon a rasure in three other MSS. It is remarkable that Kimchi and Sal. ben Melec, not being able to make any thing of the word as it stands in the text, say it means the same with מִזִּי mizziv ; that is, in effect, they admit of a various reading, or an error in the text. But as Vitranga observes, what sense is there in sucking nourishment from the splendor of her glory? He therefore endeavors to deduce another sense of the word זִיז ziz ; but, as far as it appears to me, without any authority. I am more inclined to accede to the opinion of those learned rabbins, and to think that there is some mistake in the word; for that in truth is their opinion, though they disguise it by saying that the corrupted word means the very same with that which they believe to be genuine. So in Isaiah 41:24; they say that אָפֶה apha, a viper, means the same with אָפֶס ephes, nothing; instead of acknowledging that one is written by mistake instead of the other. I would propose to read in this place מִזִּין mizzin or מִזֵּן mizzen, which is the reading of one of De Rossi's MS., (instead of מִזִּי meziz ), from the stores, from זֵן zun, to nourish, to feed; see Genesis 45:23; 2 Chronicles 11:23;

Psalm 144:13. And this perhaps may be meant by Aquila, who renders the word by ἀπο παντοδαπίας: with which that of the Vulgate, *ab omnimoda gloria*, and of Symmachus and Theodotion, nearly agree. The Chaldee follows a different reading, without improving the sense; מֵיין meyin, from the wine. - L.

## Verse 12

**Like a river, and - like a flowing stream "Like the great river, and like the overflowing stream"** - That is, the Euphrates, (it ought to have been pointed כְּנַהַר cannahar, *ut fluvius ille*, as the river), and the Nile.

**Then shall ye suck "And ye shall suck at the breast"** - These two words עַל שֶׁד al shad, at the breast, seem to have been omitted in the present text, from their likeness to the two words following; עַל צֶד al tsad, at the side. A very probable conjecture of Houbigant. The Chaldee and Vulgate have omitted the two latter words instead of the two former. See note on Isaiah 60:4; (note).

## Verses 15-17. Messiah the avenger and the day of vengeance

### Verse 15

**The Lord will come with fire "Jehovah shall come as a fire"** - For בָּאֵשׁ baesh, in fire, the Septuagint had in their copy קָאֵשׁ kaesh, as a fire; ὥς πυρ .

**To render his anger with fury "To breathe forth his anger in a burning heat"** - Instead of לְהַשִּׁיב lehashib, as pointed by the Masoretes, to render, I understand it as לְהַשִּׁיב lehashshib, to breathe, from נָשַׁב nashab .

### Verse 17

**Behind one tree "After the rites of Achad"** - The Syrians worshipped a god called Adad, Plin. Nat. Hist. 37:11; Macrob. Sat. 1:23. They held him to be the highest and greatest of the gods, and to be the same with Jupiter and the sun; and the name Adad, says Macrobius, signifies one; as likewise does the word Achad in Isaiah. Many learned men therefore have supposed, and with some probability, that the prophet means the same pretended deity. אַחַד achad, in the Syrian and Chaldean dialects, is חַד chad ; and perhaps by reduplication of the last letter to express perfect unity, it may have become חַדַּד chadad, not improperly expressed by Macrobius Adad, without the aspirate. It was also pronounced by the Syrians themselves, with a weaker aspirate, חַדַּד hadad, as in Benhadad, Hadadezer, names of their kings, which were certainly taken from

their chief object of worship. This seems to me to be a probable account of this name.

But the Masoretes correct the text in this place. Their marginal reading is אַחַת achath which is the same word, only in the feminine form; and so read thirty MSS. (six ancient) and the two oldest editions. This Le Clerc approves, and supposes it to mean Hecate, or the moon; and he supports his hypothesis by arguments not at all improbable. See his note on the place.

Whatever the particular mode of idolatry which the prophet refers to might be, the general sense of the place is perfectly clear. But the Chaldee and Syriac, and after them Symmachus and Theodotion, cut off at once all these difficulties, by taking the word אַחַד achad in its common meaning, not as a proper name; the two latter rendering the sentence thus: Οπισω αλληλων εν μεσω εσθιοντων το κρεας το χοιρειον ; "One after another, in the midst of those that eat swine's flesh." I suppose they all read in their copies אַחַד אַחַד achad achad, one by one, or perhaps אַחַד אַחַר אַחַד achad achar achad, one after another. See a large dissertation on this subject in Davidis Millii Dissertationes Selectae, Dissert. vi.

I know not what to make of this place; it is certain that our translation makes no sense, and that of the learned prelate seems to me too refined. Kimchi interprets this of the Turks, who are remarkable for ablutions. "Behind one in the midst" he understands of a large fish-pond placed in the middle of their gardens. Others make אַחַד achad a deity, as above; and a deity of various names it is supposed to be, for it is Achad, and Chad, and Hadad, and Achath, and Hecat, an Assyrian idol. Behynd the fyrst tree or the gate withine forth. - Old MS. Bible.

## **Verses 18-21. Gentiles brought into the kingdom**

### **Verse 18**

**For I know their works** - A word is here lost out of the present text, leaving the text quite imperfect. The word is יודע yodea, knowing, supplied from the Syriac. The Chaldee had the same word in the copy before him, which he paraphrases by קדמי גלן kedemi gelon, their deeds are manifest before me; and the Aldine and Complutensian editions of the Septuagint acknowledge the same word επισταμαι, which is verified by MS. Pachom. and the Arabic version. I think there can be little doubt of its being genuine. The concluding verses of this chapter refer to the complete restoration of the Jews, and to the destruction of all the enemies of the Gospel of Christ, so that the earth shall be filled with the knowledge and glory of the Lord. *Talia saecla currite!* Lord, hasten the time!

**It shall come "And I come"** - For באה baah, which will not accord with any thing in the sentence, I read בא ba, with a MS.; the participle answering to יודע yodea, with which agree the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate. Perhaps it ought to be ובה veba, when I shall come, Syr.; and so the Septuagint, according to Edit. Ald. and Complut., and Cod. Marchal.

### Verse 19

**That draw the bow** - I much suspect that the words משכי קשת moshechey kesheth, who draw the bow, are a corruption of the word משך meshek, Moschi, the name of a nation situated between the Euxine and Caspian seas; and properly joined with תבול tubal, the Tibareni. See Bochart, Phaleg. Isaiah 3:12. The Septuagint have μισσοχ, without any thing of the drawers of the bow: the word being once taken for a participle, the bow was added to make sense of it קשת kesheth, the bow, is omitted in a MS. and by the Septuagint.

**That have not heard my fame "Who never heard my name"** - For שמעי shimi, my fame, I read, with the Septuagint and Syriac, שמי shemi, my name.

### Verse 20

**And in chariots "And in counes"** - There is a sort of vehicle much used in the east, consisting of a pair of hampers or cradles, thrown across a camel's back, one on each side; in each of which a person is carried. They have a covering to defend them from the rain and the sun. Thevenot calls them *counes*, 1 p. 356. Maillet describes them as covered cages hanging on both sides of a camel. "At Aleppo," says Dr. Russell, "women of inferior condition in longer journeys are commonly stowed, one on each side of a mule, in a sort of covered cradles." Nat. Hist. of Aleppo, p. 89. These seem to be what the prophet means by the word צבבים tsabbim. Harmer's Observations, 1 p. 445.

### Verse 21

**And for Levites** - For ללויים laleviyim, fifty-nine MSS., (eight ancient), have וללויים velaleviyim, adding the conjunction ו vau, which the sense seems necessarily to require: and so read all the ancient versions. See Joshua 3:3, and the various readings on that place in Kennicott's Bible.

### Verse 22. The perpetuity of Israel and the eternal state

The truth of the eternal state is used as a simile for the fact of Israel's perpetual existence.

## **Verse 23. Blessings for the righteous**

All mankind will worship the Lord

## **Verse 24. The destiny of the wicked**

### **Verse 24**

**For their worm shall not die** - These words of the prophet are applied by our blessed Savior, Mark 9:44, to express the everlasting punishment of the wicked in Gehenna, or in hell. Gehenna, or the valley of Hinnom, was very near to Jerusalem to the south-east: it was the place where the idolatrous Jews celebrated that horrible rite of making their children pass through the fire, that is, of burning them in sacrifice to Moloch. To put a stop to this abominable practice, Josiah defiled, or desecrated, the place, by filling it with human bones, 2 Kings 23:10, 2 Kings 23:14; and probably it was the custom afterwards to throw out the carcasses of animals there, when it also became the common burying place for the poorer people of Jerusalem. Our Savior expressed the state of the blessed by sensible images; such as paradise, Abraham's bosom, or, which is the same thing, a place to recline next to Abraham at table in the kingdom of heaven. See Matthew 8:11. *Coenabat Nerva cum paucis. Veiento proxies, atque etiam in sinu recumbebat.* "The Emperor Nerva supped with few. Veiento was the first in his estimation, and even reclined in his bosom." Plin. Epist. 4:22. Compare John 13:23; for we could not possibly have any conception of it but by analogy from worldly objects. In like manner he expressed the place of torment under the image of Gehenna; and the punishment of the wicked by the worm which there preyed on the carcasses, and the fire that consumed the wretched victims. Marking however, in the strongest manner, the difference between Gehenna and the invisible place of torment; namely, that in the former the suffering is transient: - the worm itself which preys upon the body, dies; and the fire which totally consumes it, is soon extinguished: - whereas in the figurative Gehenna the instruments of punishment shall be everlasting, and the suffering without end; "for there the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

These emblematical images, expressing heaven and hell, were in use among the Jews before our Savior's time; and in using them he complied with their notions. "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God," says the Jew to our Savior, Luke 14:15. And in regard to Gehenna, the Chaldee paraphrase as I observed before on Isaiah 30:33, renders everlasting or continual burnings by "the Gehenna of everlasting fire." And before his time the son of Sirach, 7:17, had said, "The vengeance of the ungodly is fire and worms." So likewise the author of the book of Judith, chap. 16:17: "Wo to the nations rising up against

my kindred: the Lord Almighty will take vengeance of them in the day of judgment, in putting fire and worms in their flesh;" manifestly referring to the same emblem.

Kimchi's conclusion of his notes on this book is remarkable: -

"Blessed be God who hath created the mountains and the hills,  
And hath endued me with strength to finish the book of salvation:  
He shall rejoice us with good tidings and reports;  
He shall show us a token for good: -  
And the end of his miracles he shall cause to approach us."

Several of the Versions have a peculiarity in their terminations: -

And they shall be to a satiety of sight to all flesh.

*Vulgate.*

And thei schul ben into fyllyng of sigt to all fleshe.

*Old MS. Bible.*

And they shall be as a vision to all flesh.

*Septuagint.*

And the wicked shall be punished in hell till the righteous shall say, - It is enough.

*Chaldee.*

They shall be an astonishment to all flesh; So that they shall be a spectacle to all beings.

*Syriac.*

The end of the prophecy of Isaiah the prophet.

Praise to God who is truly praiseworthy.

*Arabic.*

One of my old Hebrew MSS. after the twenty-first verse repeats the twenty-third: "And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord."

## **Questionnaires on Isaiah**

1. When did Isaiah prophesy?
2. To which kingdom did he prophesy?
3. To whom was the sign of the virgin given, why was it given, and when was it fulfilled?
4. How do chapters seven and eight relate to each other?
5. Characterize the work of the Messiah in chapter eleven.
6. Who is being talked about in chapter fourteen? What are the possibilities? What is your position and why?
7. What alliance is to be judged in chapter seventeen?
8. Who is being judged in chapter twenty-three? Why?
9. Who is the servant of Yahweh in the book of Isaiah?
10. Discuss Hezekiah and his troubles.
11. Characterize the work of the Messiah in chapter fifty-three.
12. What is the "day of the Lord"?

## **Extra Questions Isaiah chapters 60-66**

1. What in chapter 61 is on God's servant?
2. What year was God's servant to proclaim? What day?
3. What does the LORD love? What does He hate?
4. What made God's clothing red?
5. If we are the clay, what is God?
6. What is the relationship between us and the hand of God?
7. By whom was God found?



8. What two things will no longer be heard in Jerusalem?
9. What will be the age of a "child" who dies in the new world?
10. What two animals will feed together?
11. What will a lion eat? What will a snake eat?
12. What is God's throne? What is His footstool?
13. What has God's hand made?
14. What of those who rebelled against God would not die?

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## Contents

The Prophets	1
The Old Testament in the Christian Religion	7
Women of the Bible – the Prophetesses	7
The Prophetic Teaching	8
Prophets in Theology	10
Anticipation of a Regenerated People: The New Covenant	12
The Prophetic Ministry of Jeremiah and Jesus (Yeshua)	13
Prophecy, History written in advance	23
The Prophetic Book Isaiah	34
Outline	36
Commentary on the Book of Isaiah, by Dr. Adam Clarke (public domain)	37
Volume 1. Book of Reproof and Promise, 1:1-6:13	38
Volume II. Book of Emmanuel 7:1-12:6	117
Volume III. God’s oracles of judgment upon the nations, 13:1-23:18	166
Volume IV. Book of judgment and promise, 24:1-27:13	237
Volume V. Book of woes preceding restoration glories, 28:1-35:10	263
Volume VI. Historical parenthesis, 36:1-39:8	314
Volume VII. Book of comfort, 40:1-66:24	332
Questionnaire on Isaiah	507
Extra questions Isaiah chapters 60-66	507
Read the Bible Online	508
Contents	509



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**Superintendent: Rev. Philippe L. De Coster, B.Th., D.D.**  
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